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ATONEMENT AND LAW

ATONEMENT AND LAW

OR

REDEMPTION IN HARMONY WITH LAW AS REVEALED IN NATURE

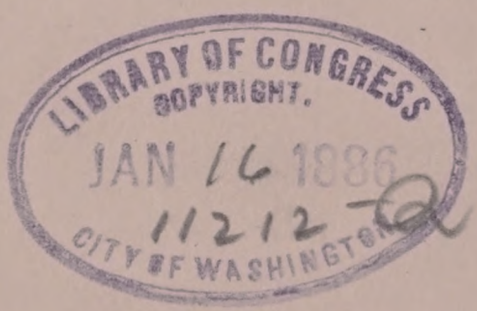
BY

JOHN M ARMOUR

"*Nature the Image of Grace*"—PASCAL

"*The world of nature is throughout a witness for the*
"*world of spirit, proceeding from the same hand,*
"*growing out of the same root, and being constituted*
"*for this very end. The characters of nature which*
"*everywhere meet the eye are not a common but a*
"*sacred writing—they are the hieroglyphics of God*"

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH



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PREFACE

The views presented in this volume have not been hastily adopted. They are the result of many years of patient and absorbing study. They have, moreover, been fully submitted to the judgment of many eminent scholars and theologians, and have received their unequivocal and hearty approval. While I have been led strongly to dissent from certain views and statements with which the scriptural doctrine of Atonement has been overlaid, that doctrine in its historical evangelical form will be found to be maintained in these pages. The views here presented indicate the ground from which the orthodox doctrine of the Great Satisfaction must at last be defended.

That the Great Redemption was wrought out in perfect accordance with law as revealed in Nature and in Providence; that it was no departure from the divinely ordained order in the administration of law; that it

was merely the highest exemplification of principles recognized everywhere throughout the Divine government, are conclusions toward which Christian thought has been tending in all the ages past. The earnestness and the hopefulness with which the greatest and most devout minds have ever reached out towards this result may be seen in such passages as the following :

"Though something of Christ be unfolded in one "age and something in another, yet eternity itself can- "not fully unfold him. 'I see something,' said Luther, "'which blessed Augustine saw not, and those that "come after me will see that which I see not.' It is in "the studying of Christ as in the planting of a new- "discovered country; at first men sit down by the sea- "side upon the skirts and borders of the land, and there "they dwell; but by degrees they search farther and "farther into the heart of the country. Ah, the best "are yet but upon the borders of this vast continent."*

"The parable, or other analogy to spiritual truth ap- "propriated from the world of nature or man, is not "merely illustration, but also in some sort proof. It is "not merely that these analogies assist to make the "truth intelligible, or, if intelligible before, present it "more vividly to the mind, which is all that some will

*Flavel.

"allow them. Their power lies deeper than this, in the "harmony unconsciously felt by all men, and by deeper "minds continually recognized and plainly perceived, "between the natural and spiritual worlds, so that anal- "ogies from the first are felt to be something more than "illustrations, happily but yet arbitrarily chosen. "They are arguments, and may be alleged as witnesses.

"For it is a great misunderstanding of the matter to "think of these as happily, but yet arbitrarily, chosen "illustrations, taken with a skilful selection from the "great stock and storehouse of unappropriated images; "from whence it would have been possible that the "same skill might have selected others as good or nearly "as good. Rather they belong to one another, the type "and the thing typified, by an inward necessity; they "were linked together long before by the law of a se- "cret affinity.

"Besides his revelation in words, God has another "and an elder, and one indeed without which it is in- "conceivable how that other could be made, for from "this it appropriates all its signs of communication. "This entire moral and visible world from first to last, "with its kings and its subjects, its parents and its chil- "dren, its sun and its moon, its sowing and its harvest, "its light and its darkness, its sleeping and its waking, "its birth and its death, is from beginning to end a

"mighty parable, a great teaching of supersensuous "truth, a help at once to our faith and to our under- "standing."*

"Miracles are not to be considered as against nature "in any other sense than that in which 'one natural "agent may be against another—as water may coun- "teract fire.'"†

"Any expedient for the salvation of man which im- "plies a violation of justice, or a relaxation of it, or "the modification of it by any other attribute, or the "reversal of any of its judgments, is necessarily false "and incompetent.

"The principle of compensatory satisfaction or "atonement underlies and pervades the whole system of "human association, and is indispensable to its order if "there is to be mercy extended to offenders.

"The person of the Mediator is the sole new ele- "ment introduced.

"There is nothing new, nothing abnormal, in the "principles of the Great Atonement."‡

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*Archbishop Trench. †Dr. McCosh, quoted by the Duke of Argyle. ‡Representative Responsibility, Rev. Henry Wallace.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

"THE GREAT EXCEPTION."

The scientific objection to the prevalent theory of Redemption. The real question at issue: Is Redemption the Great Exception? Recognized analogies and correspondences.—Scripture Emblems.—False theories of Atonement fore-doomed.—No relaxation of Law in accepting the Satisfaction of Christ.—Sovereignty in Redemption as in Creation.—The Miracle of Redemption, like all Miracles, by Intervention of adequate Power, not by Suspension of Law. . . . Page 15

PART I.

LAW, MORAL AND NATURAL.

CHAPTER I.

MOTION, FORCE AND LIFE.

Relation of Natural and Moral Law to the Lawgiver.—Motion as exemplifying Natural law.—Motion essential to our knowledge of Space and Duration.—All Motion traceable to Force, all Force to Life.—Motion, Force and Life in the Vegetable Kingdom.—Observable Motion in Plant Life.—The Modern

Microscope.—Motion in the vital seed.—Motion in and by vital Organisms in the Animal Kingdom.—Vast aggregate of Motion directly traceable to vital force.—The Motion traceable to vital force of hand and brain.—The Arrow.—The Ocean Steamer.—Motion of Heavenly Bodies in Space.—The Measure of Duration.—Motion proof of the Universality of Law.—Direct proof of the Ever-present Lawgiver. . . . 33

CHAPTER II.

THE LATEST IDOL—"THE NATURE OF THINGS."

Space and Duration.—Axioms in the realms of Law Moral and Natural.—Their relation to the Self-existent Lawgiver. . 47

CHAPTER III.

THE NATURE OF MORAL LAW.

Law never for an instant separated from God.—Law as Force and Law as Commandment.—Moral Law the Will of God in Commandment.—Cannot be implanted *within*, but must be made known *unto* moral beings.—God alone is law to Himself.—The One Great Mistake of our race.—Christ obeyed Commandment, not the promptings of his sinless humanity.—Conscience, its relation to Law.—Confirmation by the One Divine Subject of Law.—All in Heaven and in Earth to be gathered unto Him.—Surrender of the Will a necessity.—Christ's surrender not anomalous, but the Great Example. 68

CHAPTER IV.

THE WILL.

The Source and the Subject of Law.—Necessarily Self-asserting.—Testimony of all History.—Voice of Consciousness.—The God-like in man renders him capable of serving God.—

Every Subject of Law also a Source of Law.—The Image of the Divine Sovereignty.—The Desire, Hope and Promise of Dominion.—Dominion the Reward of Obedience.—The Will free from Invasion.—Responsible to God alone.—The Will, most Completely Surrendered to God, left in Utmost Freedom and Honor. 87

PART II.

ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER I.

NO SALVATION WITHOUT ATONEMENT.

The assumption that Moral Law, unlike Natural, may be relaxed.—The non-execution of Deserved Penalty cannot ensure bliss.—Cannot ensure exemption from Limitless Evil.—Conscience Satisfied only when Law is Satisfied.—Conscience indestructible.—The same Atonement, Demanded by Law, Demanded by Conscience. 107

CHAPTER II.

NO ATONEMENT BY THE VIOLATOR OF LAW.

One violation of Law renders Unrighteous.—Law requires Righteousness of Character.—Obligations of Law *Continuous*. Law requires of every subject of Law the *utmost* he can render.—Law is *Mandatory* as regards payment of penalty.—Voluntariness required in enduring the penalty, as well as in obeying the precept.—Law in its entireness Commandment.—Atonement by the Violator of Law a mere "Castle in the Air." 115

CHAPTER III.

SUBSTITUTION NORMAL IN LAW.

Section First.—Obligation of Law always upon the person.

Section Second.—Imputation of Legal Obligation and of Legal Righteousness.

Section Third.—Satisfaction of Law.

Section Fourth.—Equivalent Penalty.

Section Fifth.—"Sovereign Prerogative," "Dispensing Power," "Relaxation of Law,"

Section Sixth.—The Essential Conditions of True and Proper Suretyship or Substitution. . . 127

CHAPTER IV.

SUBSTITUTION OBEDIENCE TO LAW.

The Law of Helpfulness.—It extends to all subjects of Law.—No limit but that of the ability of the helper and the need of the helpless.—The element of substitution in all charitable works.—"I was eyes to the blind, feet was I to the lame."—Christ simply obeyed Law.—The result was Redemption.—"Great-heart" explains "to Christiana, Mercy and the rest."—No super-legal charity.—Room for highest virtue under Law.—The resources of Law revealed in Christ's work.—The pyramid of virtue completed.—Heaven and Earth rejoice. . 203

CHAPTER V.

INTERVENTION.

All danger or evil from Violated Law.—No escape or deliverance by suspension or relaxation of law or mitigation of its penalty.—Deliverance only by intervention of adequate power.—The kind of intervention determined by the kind and extent of the

danger.—These truths illustrated and confirmed in nature and in the history of mankind.—Falling stones and rubbish.—"The shorn lamb."—The serpent.—The Corliss Engine.—Revolving Wheels.—Tbe generator of electric light.—The Monarch of Babylon.—The Reign of Law and the Reign of Grace.—The last appeal to Jerusalem.—Salvation by Atonement excludes boasting.—The infinite debt of gratitude.—"The Gospel of Christ the power of God."—Miracles intervention of adequate power.—Unity of plan to be assumed.—Evidence accumulating continually.—Sun of Righteousness more and more fully revealed from age to age. 215

ATONEMENT AND LAW

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

THE GREAT EXCEPTION

REDEMPTION has been almost universally regarded as "The Great Exception." As such it has been attacked, and as such defended, for the most part, in the centuries past.

With undisguised contempt, the scientist, and with extreme suspicion, the Christian, have regarded all the manifold and varied attempts in late years, to reconcile the teachings of science with the accepted doctrines and theories of Redemption. Neither the contempt nor the suspicion was wholly deserved. Something has been done in the way of showing how many of the cardinal doctrines of Redemption are in beautiful harmony with all that is taught in Nature. Nearly all the great teachers in the Christian church, in all ages, have recognized, more or less clearly, this harmony, yet their deliverances, as a matter of fact, have never taken hold of the mass of the Christian people, nor even of Christian

theologians. The numerous and varied presentations of the harmony between the natural and the spiritual world, whether the fragmentary utterances of the great Christian teachers in all the centuries past, or the more direct efforts of distinguished authors in later times, have been accepted by Christian people with a certain degree of interest, and even delight, but they can not be said to have been accepted for their full value—rather always at a ruinous discount. At no period of the Christian era have there been so many reasons for giving careful and candid consideration to any view which tends to bring "religion within the sphere of law," or in other words, to show that theology—the theology of Scripture—is not only in accord with all true science, but is itself the science which rises above, and, in a certain sense, includes all others.

The war between science and religion can not be indefinitely prolonged. Nor can it be a drawn battle. The centuries of conflict that went before were but preparatory to the conflict of the nineteenth century. In the estimation of many, it may seem that no decisive issue shall be reached. But so it is in all battles. At Waterloo or at Gettysburg how many of the combatants could know more than that there was terrible fighting and terrible carnage? Conflict of thought, of doctrine, or of belief, is brought on by the necessities of the case. Its issue, also, it is difficult to forecast. It also can not be prolonged indefinitely, or terminated without decisive victory on the one side and utter defeat on the other. Since the world began, no conflict rose

ever to such height, extended so widely, enlisted so many of mankind, or had involved in it so much that concerns the individual, the family, the race of mankind, so deeply, not merely for this life, but for the life to come.

The question is one that includes in it all that is worth contending for in this world. It is none other than this: Has God provided and revealed to man an effectual, a perfectly credible, way by which conscious violators of law may be restored to righteousness and blessedness? The form which this question has most assuredly assumed in late years is this: Is the scheme of redemption in harmony with what we learn and observe in nature? If it be not, if its advocates admit or assert at the outset that it is not, the world of science now—whatever it may have done in the past—will not even listen to the evidence in its favor. All this is summed up in the pregnant and defiant utterance, "Science will hear nothing of a Great Exception."

This attitude of unbelief some years past caused no little alarm and consternation in the ranks of the faithful. This challenge, like that made by him of Gath, caused the hosts of Israel to waver and retire. But like that challenge of old, it in the end but opens the way to complete victory. Every assault upon the Christian faith, since the dawn of the Christian era, has resulted in the better establishment, because in the better understanding, of the doctrine assailed. One by one the great doctrines of Christianity have been assailed and defended, always with the same result.

Instead of attacking the doctrines of redemption in detail, as in the days of Athanasius and onward, the enemy now attacks the scheme of Redemption as a whole, charging that it is not merely wanting in sufficient evidence, but that, being severed from the teachings of nature, being professedly "The Great Exception," it is incredible as such.

Year by year the wiser and braver defenders of the Christian faith have been more and more prepared to accept the issue made by the enemy. Already it is apparent to all who comprehend the real nature of the conflict that it must be decided on this issue and on this alone. If the scheme of Redemption taught in Scripture be, as nearly all the great Christian teachers in all ages have believed it to be, foreshadowed and typified in nature and in providence, this fact can not but be more and more clearly brought into view, unless, indeed, it be so that no progress is to be made in the study of Nature, Providence or Scripture.

As scientific inquirers ever assume that every part of a vital organism is placed there for a purpose, and for a purpose not only beneficent but connected with the perfection of the entire organism, and this even when they are wholly ignorant of its specific purpose and its real relation to the whole; so we ought to assume that everything in the economy of Nature and Providence is connected with that all-embracing plan of which Redemption is the great consummation, and this even while we are, as yet, unable to trace that connection. In fact, the discovery of the unity of plan

in all the works and ways of God is the lesson set before the race of mankind, a lesson not to be fully learned even when the last trumpet shall sound, but one to be taken up anew, and under vastly more favorable conditions, in the life to come.

One of the greatest obstacles to the immediate and complete defense of Christianity against the assaults of the enemy is the deep and almost universal prejudice against any and all attempts to reconcile religion and science. It would be too much to say that these attempts have been wholly useless. It is not too much to say that they have neither satisfied the Christian world nor disturbed the non-Christian. The cannonade all along the line has been treated rather as mock than real battle.

If it be asked why have well-meaning and able Christian Apologists been thus treated and regarded almost alike by friend and foe, I venture to affirm that the reason has been that the strategic vantage-ground from which Christianity is to make her defense and to win her grandest victories has not yet been seized by the Christian hosts, in fact has but been indicated by a few of the most courageous of the acknowledged leaders of Christian thought.

It will not do to close our eyes to the terrible "decadence of religion in the world of science." If the doctrine of Redemption, as set forth in Scripture, can not be vindicated as in harmony, in beautiful and exact harmony, with all that we discover in Nature and in Providence, we shall not soon witness any arrest of

that decadence. Redemption is, and Redemption will yet be clearly shown to be, not the Great Exception, but the grand exemplification of a manifestly pre-determined plan, foreshadowed in Creation even from the first.

There has been, indeed, abundant discussion of analogies and of surprising correspondences. These have been presented, however, as beautiful curiosities. They have never been seriously or profoundly studied, either by the skeptical or the believing world, for after making the most of these resemblances and analogies from Nature, Christian Apologists have generally, in the face of the enemy, admitted that Revealed Religion is, in its main features, "the Great Exception," (revelation itself an exception—the fall of our race an exception—Redemption by intervention and by substitution an exception, that is, not provided for in the Nature of law;) yet an exception not such that it is wholly incredible, for in Nature behold this or that which faintly resembles it, or is "somewhat analogous," or is on "analogous principles!"

There are mighty arguments in favor of a bolder course. The attack of the enemy will constrain the Christian hosts to seek firmer ground.

The charge that the revealed way of salvation is manifestly out of harmony with Nature, if it result in bringing to light, as never before, that perfect harmony, will be but another exemplification of the way in which the trial always leads to the triumph of faith.

It is safe to assume that what God purposed from

eternity as the chief manifestation of his infinite perfections was foreshadowed in all his works and ways. Indeed, it is incredible that God's utmost manifestation of His perfections in Redemption should be one to the evidence and illustration and support of which the universe itself, rightly interpreted, would not ultimately come.

The Bible in its vast range of emblems and parable, teaches not merely faint resemblances, to be regarded as mere illustrations. The wealth of meaning in the abounding emblems of Scripture has by no means been exhausted. The time has come for a more profound and reverent study of that vast range of emblems from Nature to which Scripture on every page refers us. If we imagine we can grasp the spiritual truth, and turn away regardless of the emblem in which God sets it before us in His Word, we dishonor alike the voice of God in Scripture and in Nature. If when God tells us, "A man shall be as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," we answer. "Yes, we know that Christ protects us from all evil," we have learned but part of the lesson this emblem was designed to teach. If we add to this our own theory that Christ protects us, not by meeting and enduring "the actual execution in strict rigour of justice of the unrelaxed penalty of the law," but by meeting and enduring that which, "although it did not thoroughly discharge the obligation" and might for that reason have been refused, was graciously accepted, was "regarded as a satisfaction"—we reject part of the lesson taught in this emblem. No

sovereign act of Dispensing Power was put forth that the great rock might protect those who took refuge under its shadow. Nor was any leniency (Turrettine's *Epieikeia*) shown, but the sun's fiercest rays fell sheer upon the massive rock.

The Bible more than any other book in the world appeals to Nature with boundless confidence. The proper study of Nature is quite as necessary to the proper understanding of the Bible as is the study of the Bible to the proper interpretation of Nature.

The volume I now submit to the judgment of the enlightened world, is the result of many years of deeply interesting study, during which I have been led on with ever increasing wonder and delight in the discovery of the beautiful harmony between God's plan revealed in Scripture and in all Nature. I have endeavored to trace this harmony in these pages in outline, deeply impressed with the fact that a subject so vast and so overpowering could not be fully treated in a life-time—conscious of utter inability to do more than indicate those trains of thought into which I was led with boundless delight year after year. In all these studies I have ever returned to the inspired word, to find with surprise and delight that conclusions reached on independent lines, and often by long and circuitous trains of reasoning, were clearly and distinctly set forth in most familiar texts of Scripture.

The series of propositions which I was led to adopt, with the arguments in support of them, were all arranged without any view to the support of a pre-con-

ceived theory of Redemption, but simply because the study of each special topic led me to accept, as the very truth, the proposition itself. In fact, it was equal surprise and satisfaction to discover that every one of them did come directly to the support of the general proposition: Redemption not the Great Exception, but the supreme, final and most glorious exemplification of a plan which was in the mind of God from eternity, and is indicated, foreshadowed and exemplified in Nature and in Providence.

What I maintain in this treatise, while there is a phase of it that is new, is, taken as a whole, not only old but the logical support of the old. The doctrine, "Christ did make a proper, real and full satisfaction," needs for its support the doctrine, Substitution a normal provision of Law; so that what, in a sense, is new comes to the support of the old—fits into it closely as nothing else does or can.

The perfection of Christ's Atonement has been very imperfectly apprehended, even by the millions glorying in the Christian name. Half-awakened, and but emerging from the long night that for so many centuries brooded over our world, they as yet see it, for the most part, as in the twilight or under a cloud. It will not always be so. New phases of the excellent glory, the divine perfection, of The Great Atonement will be made to shine forth. False theories, like a heavy vail, have too long hidden from view its exquisite finish, its goodly proportions. But God's time will come for the unvailing of "Christ's Finished Work" before the eyes

of all men. False theories have prevailed in Theology, but not a whit more than in other sciences. False theories in Theology, as in other sciences, must sooner or later come to grief. Theories of the Atonement constructed in defiance alike of Scriptural Truth and Natural Law, are fore-doomed. For Scripture and Nature are the upper and the nether mill-stones, prepared of God to grind them to powder. Nature, no more than Scripture, knows anything of Atonement that does not satisfy law.

The satisfaction theory of the Atonement is the only theory that can survive. Its survival is assured on the same grounds as the survival of Harvey's theory of the circulation of the blood. It will survive not by compromise but by victory. The satisfaction theory of the Atonement, or the doctrine that "Christ did make a proper, real and full satisfaction," can be maintained only on the ground that substitution is provided for in the very nature of law. From any lower ground the Great Atonement must necessarily appear with more or less of *penumbra* resting upon it. Even the ablest theologians among the orthodox, if they assume that there was a "relaxation of the law,"* "a high act of sovereign dispensing power, dispensing in some respect with the law,"† "an exercise of sovereign prerogative substituting person for person"‡ in order that Christ might make atonement for us, may *call* Christ's atonement perfect; may write "De Satisfactione Christi;"

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*Turretine. †Symington. ‡Hodge.

but they do not, for they can not, believe that Christ's work in our behalf "did thoroughly discharge the obligation." That is, they do not maintain but surrender the doctrine of Satisfaction. For Christ's work was not a satisfaction unless it was such that law, without "relaxation," law in strict rigour of justice, could accept it.

The work of redemption was the result of the coming under law of one who was able to meet its full demands. Redemption is the highest instance of the one only way of deliverance from danger or evil threatening those who are violators of law, viz: Intervention of adequate power—the one only way taught in Scripture, in Nature and in Providence. When I maintain that the work of Redemption is carried forward under law, and in perfect accordance with law, I hasten to add that as to its origin, it is of the mere sovereignty of God. But even in this respect it is not The Exception, for *sovereignty characterizes all beginnings*.

Creation could be nothing else than a sovereign act. To deny sovereignty here, would be to deny sovereignty altogether; for, if the created universe came into being, and is what it is, as a necessary consequence of the existence of a first cause, that first cause could not be a person, could not be endowed with freedom of will, could not be God. Besides, if the existence of the first cause necessitated the existence of the universe it must have done so from eternity. There could have been no beginning of the created universe.

Redemption, as well as creation, must also be a purely sovereign determination of the divine will. This is required by the necessities of the case, as well as plainly declared in Scripture. No doctrine of Redemption that in any way casts the slightest shadow over the high mountain of Divine Sovereignty can be tolerated for a moment. All theologies that in any manner teach or imply that there was any obligation upon God to do this or that for fallen, rebellious subjects of law, are unscriptural, unreasonable, if not blasphemous. Divine sovereignty is to be recognized in determining to save any fallen ones, in determining who should be saved, in "choosing," "raising up" and "delivering up" the Saviour, and in the Saviour's giving of himself; but this Sovereign Redemption once determined, was wrought out under law and in exact accordance with law. God honored his own law in that this his supreme work was performed by "*his own son*" in the capacity of a "*servant*" and "*under law.*" Sovereignty consisted in determining to save, and in providing a Saviour. The Saviour once provided, and having freely come under law, thenceforward all was done in obedience to law. All that was needed for our Redemption the law itself then required of him who became our surety and who was under law and was "mighty to save."

It is here that divine sovereignty shines forth most gloriously, for here it is in its own proper sphere. To regard sovereignty as occupying this sphere alone, is not to limit but to assign to it utmost freedom. This

is the region in which no limit can be found. Every effort men have made to free themselves from the difficulties that, in the nature of the case, cluster around sovereignty in its own glorious sphere above law, do but bring them, in the end, to vastly greater difficulties. For, denying sovereignty in its own sphere, they are, for that reason, brought face to face with it, in a region and under conditions a thousand fold more perplexing than those which cluster around it in its own glorious height about the throne of Him who is "Higher than the highest."

"God provided a Saviour for all men; no sovereign choice of part of our race; God gave Christ to die, and Christ died, alike for all men." Ah! Here is smooth sailing. Lo! At one stroke of a very small magic wand, that largest and most awful yet most glorious storm-cloud that eye of man or angel ever beheld—one side of it radiant with the glory of the divine "goodness," the other dark unutterably with the terribleness of the divine "severity—" is swept away and the sky of the upper heaven, about the throne of God, is azure without a cloud!

"No sovereign choice!" Ah! What do we meet? Sovereignty, actually determining some to life and some to destruction, and this after all had been alike embraced in one glorious purpose of love; nay, had been redeemed by the same precious blood!

The clouds in our own skies may at times be dark, terrible and awe-inspiring, even as God intended them to be, but they are both beneficent and glorious. Nor

does their glory or grandeur ever change into gloom, except as by some disturbance of the order of nature they come down upon us in mere mist and fog. They are specially glorious when high above us, or distant in the horizon, in the morning or evening of our little day. In like manner the more glorious clouds, in that broader and higher sky that over-arches the created universe, are terrible exceedingly, even as God designed they should be, but they also are both beneficent and glorious. From out these clouds blessing and cursing do assuredly proceed, for Nature, no more than Scripture, knows anything of a God who is mighty to save but not to destroy. Here also, as we look either upon the "morning" or the "evening," these clouds appear in utmost splendor, so that loyal hearts are "not afraid with any amazement."

If the Christian world must at length abandon the long cherished belief that miracles involve the suspension of law, it will be because they will accept the higher faith that, law coming from infinite wisdom, there could be no need for its suspension—the higher faith that all miracles were wrought in a way that honored law.* This is, on many grounds, altogether credible, but specially in view of the fact that the One

*I have lately, with much satisfaction, lighted upon numerous emphatic declarations of eminent Christian authors presenting the same view respecting miracles which is maintained throughout this treatise. The defence of miracles has confessedly been less satisfactory than that of almost any other tenet of the Christian world. I have no hesitation in saying that the reason of this is, that the defence was conducted upon an unscriptural and unreasonable theory of miracles. Suspension of law would be confession of its inadaquacy. Miracles by Intervention of adequate power leave law in utmost honor and freedom, while the Intervention itself reveals the wondrous resources of law.

Miracle which rises infinitely above all others, the Miracle of Redemption itself, was one which, in its very nature, honored law, in that it, in no respect, interfered with its onward movement. If the miracle of our Redemption involved no suspension of law, nay, if it was necessary just because law could not be suspended, shall we hesitate to believe that all the miracles wrought in attestation of it, were wrought with like regard to the sacredness and inviolability of law.

The work of Redemption as well as the course of Nature proceeds in accordance with a pre-determined plan, and under absolute and invariable law, law quite as exact as that which governs the material universe. Every end contemplated by the divine mind in the realm of the spiritual, and all the means for its attainment under the reign of absolute law, were determined, with infinite exactness, from the beginning.

PART I

LAW, MORAL AND NATURAL

CHAPTER I

MOTION, FORCE AND LIFE

LAW has its origin in the nature of God. This is true of Natural as well as of Moral Law, for they are not separated, they are not separable; they do not merely co-operate, nor is it the whole truth to say that they *become* one—they *are* one in awful onward movement in the universe. The forces of Nature do always "work together for good" to every loyal subject of law, while they are all arrayed against every transgressor whether of moral or of natural law; for the forces of the natural and of the moral world do of necessity proceed from the same will, and are directed to the same ends.

To any just conception of Atonement, either as to its nature or its necessity, it is essential that we have clear and correct views of the origin and nature of law both moral and natural. It is especially important that we recognize the intimate and necessary relation which law sustains to the Lawgiver. The discussion of the origin and nature of law, in this and following chapters, is designed to be directly preparatory to a proper conception of that one supreme instance and exemplification of atonement—justly called The Atonement—

as it is revealed in Scripture, provided for in the very nature of Law, illustrated, foreshadowed, exemplified in that wondrous range of emblems which God designedly furnished for this end, and to which he in his holy word ever refers us.

Natural law is but the name we have given to the observed uniform method of the acting of the Supreme Power, whether acting directly, or, by means of any series of second causes however extended. When in common language we speak of any result as produced by the operation of natural law, we can mean nothing else than the acting of some power or being, according to an established and uniform method.

I desire in this chapter to set forth the true relation of natural law to the one Lawgiver. It will readily be admitted that motion in the universe furnishes at once the grandest, most universal, and most readily apprehended exemplification of natural law. Any satisfactory view of the relation which Motion sustains to Force and Life would go far to establish a general principle in regard to the true nature and origin of what we call Natural Law.

Motion essential to our knowledge of Space and Duration.

Our knowledge of space is due, not merely to the extension of objects in space, but to motion. The exercise of the senses, without motion of any kind, if that were possible—which it is not—could not give us the knowledge of space.

But Motion, which is essential to our knowledge of Space, is to man, and probably to all finite beings, the chief, if not the sole reliable and accurate measure of Duration. The universe of material orbs in space, whatever else it be, is assuredly a grand, and every way perfect time-piece. That this was one of the ends designed of God we are expressly informed in Scripture: "And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years." Some arrangement, for the accurate measurement of time, was of the utmost importance. How marvelously the arrangement actually made serves the end for which it was designed, all may readily see.* Nor do we at all appreciate it, if we regard it merely, or mainly, with reference to the wants of man in this life. It is for all time and for all worlds.

As we contemplate the wondrous movement of bodies in the solar system, measuring time for us with absolute exactness, and as we rise to the conception of the harmonious motion of all bodies in space measuring duration for all created beings, we can not but be actuated with an intense desire to know the cause of this wondrous motion. But the question, what is the cause of the motion of the heavenly bodies in

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*The very accuracy and perfection of the grand time-piece provided for us, and the readiness with which all can refer to it, owing to inexcusable insensibility and shameful ingratitude and perversity, may be made the reason for regarding it, if not with indifference, at least with less admiration than is due. In fact, many of the divine arrangements for man's well-being are almost wholly overlooked, simply because they serve so admirably and uninteruptedly the beneficent ends for which they were designed.

space, naturally resolves itself into the more general question: What is the cause of all motion?* For it is not to be assumed that there can be more than *one* cause or origin of motion. To this question, the ready answer, the only answer, is *Force.* To this, universal assent will at once be given. But this answer simply raises the real question: *What is the origin of Force?*

Careful study of this question, careful attention to what has been thought and recorded by the world's greatest teachers in the centuries past, but especially to whatever in the ever-widening field of the known phenomena of Nature in any way bears upon this subject, can not fail to lead to the profound conviction that all Force is traceable to Life. Pursuing certain lines of thought and investigation, it is practicable to be quite as fully assured of this as we are that all Motion is traceable to Force.

All Motion traceable to Force—All Force to Life.

1. In the entire vegetable kingdom we have perpetual demonstration of the intimate and necessary relations of Motion, Force and Life. Even the least instructed, who have no conception of the real activity or of the observable motion in all growing plants, can not but know that the great grain crops are "elevated," first of all, in the fields and solely by vital power: "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear;"

*Even a child can not look upon any moving object without instinctively inquiring into and searching for the cause of its motion. And it is worthy of remark that the child never entertains the notion that any *visible* thing moves of itself, but always assumes that the real cause of motion is some invisible power.

can not but know also that the mighty forests are built up by vital force operating tirelessly century after century; can not but know that the whole world is covered over with the countless, varied and marvelous products and proofs of the mysterious, universally recognized, but invisible vital power. But only those who have patiently and perseveringly gazed into that limitless world into which the microscope is the only door, and have witnessed the amazing activity of vital force in plant life, can have any idea of the manner in which the entire vegetable kingdom testifies of the intimate relations of Motion, Force and Life. The limit of observable motion, even when that limit has been extended to the utmost by means of the marvelous power of the modern microscope, it must be remembered, is but the visible horizon and not the "end of the world."

Let any one spend but a few hours in watching the rapid and incessant motion in a small leaf* under one of the best microscopes art has been able to furnish, the field being less than the ten thousandth part of an inch. In that small field can be distinctly seen twelve rows of cells with an average of five cells in each row, or sixty cells in all. The currents can be seen flowing rapidly along their appropriate channels, like rivers with broken ice on the surface, while in each of the sixty oblong cells the fluids are seen circulating like eddies or whirl-pools in a rushing stream. The area

*Such as that of the *Anacharis Alsimastrum*.

of each of the sixty cells is, of course, but the *six hundred thousandth part of an inch*. But for the perfection which microscopic art has attained—attained only in late years—this amazing activity would never have been suspected, would never have been credited. Witnessing this activity in the ten thousandth part of an inch of the surface of a small leaf plucked from the stem, what would be the impression upon the mind, could we look upon a single tree, or even a small plant, discerning the activity of vital force in every part of it with the same degree of clearness? While we can not do this, we can, unless imagination has ceased to serve the purpose for which it was given us, transfer whatever we have seen in the leaf under the microscope to all the leaves of the forest, to all vegetation on the globe; for in every cell of every living plant there is substantially the same vital activity. Whether we look upon forest or field the eye of the mind should discern, not merely motionless forms of life, but everywhere intensely active vital power. Were we capable of seeing the real activity of the vital force in a living tree, it would be to us scarcely less wonderful than the "great sight" which Moses turned aside to see; nor could it fail to produce in us a sense of the divine presence not unlike that which he experienced. This vital action, which man and all created intelligences must ever strive to behold, and may ever more and more clearly discover, God himself alone sees as it is.

But we might begin farther back, with that motion,

or vital activity, which is in the seed itself. It is now accepted by the foremost students of plant life, that in the vital seed, whether an acorn, a grain of wheat or some tiny seed scarcely to be seen without the aid of the microscope, there is perpetual activity, the vital force keeping up continuous motion, and that the cessation of this vital force, and consequent activity, in any seed, is the cessation of life. Any one whose imagination is not stricken with paralysis can readily perceive how this bears upon the relations of Motion, Force and Life.

2. The same line of remark might be followed out at length in regard to Force and Motion in every department of the animal kingdom. Here also the Life is the Force, and force that never ceases to produce activity. In the *ova* vitalized, and from that instant, on and on through all vicissitudes, Motion is demonstrably uninterrupted till death, or rather the cessation of Motion *is* death. The only absolute test of life is vital action. When this has ceased it is proof that vital force has ceased—that vitality is extinct. Nor is there the slightest ground to believe that this vital action, having ceased for an instant, can start again of itself. Vital activity can no more begin in plant or animal organism in which it has once ceased than in matter in which it never existed. The animal kingdom, then, is a witness, and in all its extent, with myriad voices, in perfect unison, it declares, "All Motion is from vital force." The testimony of these two kingdoms is both positive and negative. Their witness

agrees: "In us all Motion is from vital force." "With us all Motion ceases when vital force ceases."

3. We come now to consider Motion as produced by vital organisms beyond that which is in each of them for its own up-building and sustaining. The Motion which is of vital force within vital organisms is indeed wonderful, but the Motion traceable to vital force aside from, and over and above that which is expended within, is even more wonderful. The aggregate of the Motion and Force of all living beings on the earth, in the sea, and in the upper air, for a single day, neither man nor angel could at all estimate. Specialists who have studied, for instance, the vital force expended by certain kinds of birds in the air, the rapidity and continuousness of their motions, have met with facts before which the imagination itself stands confessedly powerless—wings kept in motion for long periods at such rate as to render utterly hopeless all efforts in the way of computation or estimate. With what wonder, what amazement may we, in some such way awakened and instructed, contemplate that aggregate of motion and of force perpetually kept up by the countless myriads of animate beings in earth, air and sea even from that of the animalculæ of the marshy pool or "the *ephemeron* that sports in the sun-beam" to that of behemoth who "maketh the sea to boil like a pot of ointment!" This aggregate of motion all from the living, all owing to life.

4. When we come, however, to man, and consider the motion really traceable to him, we have to deal

with a very different problem, and unless we give special attention, we shall probably leave out of the estimate the vastly greater part of the evidence in this case. For man, unlike all other living beings on earth, or at least, infinitely beyond other beings on earth, has the power to produce motion, not merely by force of muscle without skill, but he has the power to originate and sustain motion, on a grand scale, by means of the vital force of brain as well.

The savage who should cast a stone a little way into the sea by strength of arm, or from a sling, or shoot an arrow from his bow, or propel his little bark a few miles from shore, in a calm sea, would give proof of the extent of his power. Clearly, in each case, from that of the stone which could be hurled but a few rods, to that of the vessel which might be propelled perhaps as many miles, the motion would be wholly attributable to vital force of muscle and brain, or to skill and strength.

The civilized man who constructs and launches the ocean steamer that ploughs its furrow through the sea, in calm and storm, for thousands of miles, gives proof of his power to produce motion by skill and strength. The ocean steamer that circumnavigates the globe, displacing the water and defying the storm, is, as one might truthfully say, hurled around the world; and its motion, in that entire revolution, is as clearly traceable to the vital force of hand and brain in the civilized man, as is that of the stone from the hand, or the arrow from the bow, of the savage. Let an honest in-

quirer light upon the ocean steamer at any stage of its long journey. Let him search the vessel from keel to top-mast. Finding no life in hull or rigging, no life in coal or fire, no life in water or steam, no life in engine or propeller, shall he say, "This vessel does not owe its force and its motion to life at all." If he so determine he is not a philosopher but a fool. For every part of the vessel, from keel to top-mast, is eloquent in its testimony to the vital force of combined skill and strength of man in its construction. And this we may recognize with all the confidence with which, on approaching an eight-day clock in the middle of the week, we recognize its onward movement as the result of the vital force of the constructor of the clock, combined with the vital force of the person who wound it up; for not only is the vital force of the hand that wound the clock as truly the cause of its continued motion as though that hand had never for an instant been withdrawn, but the vital force of the contriver and actual constructor, though he may have passed away centuries ago, is as clearly prolonged as would be the vital force of the hand that wound the clock, though the very next hour it were cold and motionless in death. I have ventured to dwell longer on this illustration because of the argument it furnishes in favor of the recognition of vital force as the cause of other and infinitely grander movements.

5. We come now, to a stage in our investigations in which, unless we exercise the utmost vigilance, we shall utterly fail to interpret the transcendent scene that

rises before us. Thus far all has been comparatively easy. But now as we reach that grand scene where there is an aggregate of motion in comparison with which all we have hitherto considered is but as the small dust of the balance; where, as to rapidity, the swiftest we have as yet contemplated is as that of the snail or the sloth; where, as to vastness of orbit, even that of the Ocean Steamer around the globe is but as the "finger ring of a little girl"—as we contemplate motion on a scale so grand, motion of bodies so vast and so numerous, motion in orbits a scarcely perceptible arc of which has been traversed since man appeared on earth, motion which highest created intelligences must regard with never ending wonder and admiration, shall we begin to detach, in our conception, motion from force, or force from that which lives? If we do, how can we any longer pretend that we are consistent, scientific or philosophical? All motion hitherto considered has been traceable to that which lives. Why at this stage begin to question whether that which moves is moved by force or whether force proceeds from life? Motion on a small scale we have found is from vital force. All the motion that man has ever been able to trace to its source he has found to proceed from life. There is not a shred of trustworth evidence that any *visible* thing on earth has the power to originate motion. And the invisible power that causes all the motion we can at all trace to its source is always vital power. We have traced force and motion from that in the smallest seed in plant,

and that in the *ova* in animal life, and have found force and motion ever from that which lives. Why then, when we stand in the presence of the most wondrous motion—motion that speaks of force beyond all conception—do we, all at once, lapse from the conviction that motion must proceed from force and that force must proceed from life? Doubt comes in where evidence is most abundant. A stone seen moving through the air we can believe was hurled by some lad though we see him not; a cannon ball crossing the bay we do not doubt was sent by persons having skill and power; an ocean steamer driven around the world we know owes its force and motion to skill and power of living beings. When we see mighty orbs moving in space, why do we raise any question regarding the origin of motion and force? The only shadow of reason that can be imagined is that we cannot readily conceive of a being able to produce motion on so grand a scale, a being infinite, ever present and almighty, the source of all motion, all force producing all motion in the universe. In a vastly higher sense than that in which the motion of the steamship in mid-ocean is to be attributed to man, all motion in the universe, including that produced *in* and *by* vital organisms, in this world and in all worlds, is to be attributed to the Infinite, the Everliving, the Almighty. In the presence of the moving universe may we not exclaim: "*Power belongeth unto God.*"

Why should we hesitate to accept the conclusions thus reached? The data furnished to all men leave

them without excuse. The soundness of the reasoning by which I have undertaken to prove that Motion, mere Motion, as recognized everywhere in the universe, since it assures us of the universality of law, is to us direct proof of the existence of the Ever-living, Ever-present Lawgiver, is confidently submitted to the judgment of candid and competent reasoners.

The Great Time-piece of the universe in its surpassing grandeur and glory may continue to move with absolute exactness and utmost harmony from age to age and century to century; the multitudes of mankind may continue to look upon it mainly to see what time of day it is, as indicated upon the broad dial plate that meets their gaze; may never reflect that this grand Time-measurer, like every poor imitation of it man has ever constructed, measures time by means of *Motion*, and Motion sustained by Force, this force in its turn necessarily from the living, traceable to the living; yet there may be those who shall find time, even in this busy age, to look with prolonged and steadfast gaze, with awakened and quickened powers, and with intensest interest upon the ever-present and never-exhausted wonders of that aggregate of motion before which all effort towards estimate is perfectly powerless; and, when favorably situated therefor, the truly evidential nature of God's glorious work may flash out even as the noonday itself, so that, before this one surpassing demonstration of the power and presence of God, all doubt shall be driven away even as night itself is chased around our globe by the glorious King of Day; so

that thenceforward, even to life's close, they shall live in the noon-day splendor of unquestioning faith—Faith, not vision, for God gives everywhere and in all things not merely proof that he is, but that he is and must be forevermore The Invisible. Though invisible, he is neither the incredible, nor the Unknowable; for he has set before all men "the invisible things of him" and these "are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." Among the invisible things of him which are clearly seen, that is, clearly and fully recognized by all men, motion, force and life have place; for by these are made known the universality of law, the presence, power and glory of the Ever-living, Ever-present Lawgiver.

CHAPTER II

THE LATEST IDOL,—"THE NATURE OF THINGS."

"All the gods of the Nation are Idols." . . .*
"Give unto the Lord the Glory due unto His name."—DAVID.

"This Old-time Religion . . .
It was good for Paul and Silas,
It is good enough for me."—JUBILEE SONG.

"To you it is commanded O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the King hath set up."—DANIEL.

Are there, either in the realm of moral or of natural law, certain truths, axioms or principles which do not rest upon or proceed from, either the will, the nature, or the being of God, but are based upon a nature of things? That is, in morals is right right and wrong wrong independently of the will, the nature and even the being of God? In natural law are the relations of numbers, lines and figures determined independently of God, so that we are forbidden to say that they are what they are because he is, and because he is the infinitely wise being that he is? In other words, is there

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*Even the gods devised, and fashioned by *"The best modern thought."*

in the nature of things a standard of right which exists necessarily, independently and apart from God, according to which he himself acts, and are there axioms which are derived neither from his will, nor from his nature, but which exist independently of God altogether?

I do not hesitate to affirm that there are in the realm of morals, certain truths, axioms or principles that do rest on the same basis with the axioms or principles, say, of Mathematics or of Natural Philosophy; that is, if the one class of axioms be independent of God, so also is the other. If two plus two equal four independently of God, then ingratitude is blameworthy independently of God. If the axioms in Natural Law are not of God, neither are the axioms in Moral Law.

We are brought thus to a question before which the human mind may well stand with utmost awe and deepest humility, yet, as it is not possible that a question of this kind should be held in *equilibrio*, so that one's mind should not incline to one or the other of the only two answers possible, and as it can not be denied that many persons do very decidedly incline to the belief that axioms are based upon a nature of things and not upon the will, the attributes or the being of God, and as this does most assuredly set up a standard unto which God himself is assumed to conform, it can not be improper to inquire into this matter with utmost ardor and patience.

There is no nature of things, either actual or supposable, except as things themselves either exist, or are

assumed to exist. It might be said that two plus two would equal four, even were there no two things in the universe—abstract truth would remain. But abstract truth must not be assumed to exist in *vacuo;* that is, not only apart from the concrete, but apart from the mind that *apprehends* it.

The nature of things, the modern impersonation of all abstract truth, can indeed be apprehended as abstracted from, or apart from, the actually existing things in the universe, but this is done by the mind that apprehends, so that it is nothing short of downright madness to imagine this "nature of things" as existing not only apart from the actual universe, but in space, or in vacuo, and apart from the supreme intelligence; for surely the created intelligence that apprehends the nature of things can lay no claim to having had anything to do in *originating* or *constituting* that nature of things which it apprehends. I realize with what limitless scorn the disciple of the best modern thought would reject the assertion, that two plus two equal four because God himself so determined, or because God is and is what he is, every way infinite in his perfections, or that the necessary self-evident relations of numbers are in any way to be considered as of and from the will of God; yet this conclusion is unavoidable if men will but reason carefully and closely, unavoidable, except by the adoption of a view which logically implies the denial of God altogether. There is nothing determined by the nature of God which is not determined by the will of God. To attribute certain determina-

tions to the will of God, and others to his nature, is to make a distinction for which there is not only no foundation, but one that is inconsistent with the very conception of an infinitely perfect being. What proceeds from the nature of God proceeds from the will of God. Those who attribute axiomatic truths, in the realms of natural and moral law, to the nature or being of God, may indeed be credited with *intending* to give to God "*the glory due unto his name*"—it is better than to attribute them to a nature of things supposed to exist independently of God—it were well if they could be brought to perceive that what is determined by his nature is determined not *for* but *by* his will. Even the defenders of the faith are often swayed by prevalent notions and formulas respecting the absolute standard of righteousness. "When we affirm that God is holy, we do not mean that he makes right right, by simply willing it; but that he wills it because it is right. There must be, therefore, some absolute standard of righteousness." To this the most abject worshiper of the latest idol, the nature of things, would heartily assent. When it is added, "The absolute standard of right is the divine nature," there is furnished but a partial correction of the concession made in the previous sentence. To find the absolute standard of righteousness in the divine nature seems indeed to be, to give all glory to God; but if this be done without regarding the will of God as of the nature of God, if the will be impliedly excluded, the expression is, to say the least, unfortunate. The will of God being of his nature is *itself* the

absolute standard of right. The will of God is not governed by something else—not by a nature of things existing apart from God—not by a supposed nature of God from which his will is, even in thought, eliminated. The will of God is not something related, dependent and dominated. "God's nature makes right right and God wills it *because* it is right!" But, if God's nature which makes right right, is a nature wherein his will has place, and is in glorious activity and dominancy, how can his will be spoken of as, in any sense, excluded from making right right? How can it, in any proper sense of the terms, be spoken of as governed by and conforming to a standard of righteousness when *it itself is*, not only *in*, and *of*, but *the* standard of righteousness. To make the nature of God the standard of righteousness seems, indeed, a position to which no objection could be taken. Had this proposition stood alone it might have been accepted without hesitation; for then we should have been at liberty to interpret it as equivalent to saying that God himself was the standard of righteousness, but we learn by the connection in which it is found, that the nature of God is contemplated as something apart from, and something that determines for the will. The underlying fallacy, in all such conceptions, is a most prevalent, and apparently ineradicable fallacy regarding the nature of will. The thought is, "God could not by willing it make wrong right." The conception involved in this statement, and that gives it its only significance, is a conception that is *inadmissible*—the conception of God's willing

wrong to be right. This conception is plainly resolvable into the conception of God's not being God at all. The statement should neither be denied nor affirmed but should be simply *rejected.* What God wills can not but be right; for the will of God is itself the standard of right. "He wills it *because* it is right!" This must mean that its being right is not owing to his will; it is right on some grounds, and for some reasons apart from his will. Man recognizes a standard of righteousness, and his will conforms thereto. That standard of righteousness is the will of God, in what way soever made known. But does God also recognize a standard of righteousness which his will also conforms unto—a standard apart from his will, a standard that makes right right, and right being made right, he wills it *because* it is right?

It would be interesting to know what relation axiomatic truths, in the realms of moral and natural law, are considered to sustain to the will of God. If God's will must not be regarded as having anything to do in the determination of these, if they are not of the things that are designedly ordered and arranged by him, if they must be conceived of as necessarily determined antecedently to, and independently of the will of God himself, then, so far as design or intention is concerned, it is little matter whether they be attributed to "the nature of things" directly, as so many do, or to a supposed nature of God. That which is good and that which is true—that which alone is good, that which alone is true—God does not merely recognize and confirm "*be-*

cause" it is good and true; he ordains it and it is true because it is of Him. Otherwise the sphere of the will of God, in which his wisdom and goodness could be displayed, must be greatly restricted; otherwise the will of God must be conceived of as coming into action only in those supposed cases in which there should be more than one way possible to be chosen by infinite wisdom. What is this but to deny the exercise of the will, in that very case in which its glorious prerogative is most fully displayed? Can it be believed that there is room for the exercise of the will of God, only where "two ways meet;" when that infinite perfection which all recognize everywhere in the realms of moral and natural law is the result of the infinite perfections of God Himself—the result of the free and sovereign *exercise* of all his perfections, including, not excluding, his will? In fact those who deny that the will of God had anything to do in determining axiomatic truths in the natural and moral worlds have to take but a single step to bring them to the feet of the latest idol, The Nature of Things. Thus—Before God created the material and moral universe, the nature of things required that it be, in many respects at least, such as that we recognize around us: Other axioms, for instance, in mathematics, it is not merely impossible for us to have the faintest conception of, but we confidently affirm that different axioms are impossible. In the same manner, and with equal confidence, we affirm that different axioms in morals are impossible. Two plus two can not equal five. Ingratitude can not be praise-

worthy. But is it not astonishing, that, on discovering clearly that truth in the realm of the natural, and *right* in the realm of the moral, are not relative but absolute, that wisdom infinite manifestly characterizes the actual as recognized by us in the natural, and both wisdom and righteousness infinite, in the moral world—both worlds made by him who is the fountain of wisdom and righteousness, made by free determination of the divine will—this very perfection or absoluteness of truth, wisdom and righteousness should be made the reason for excluding the will or design of God?

Admitting that there could not be different axioms, i. e., a different nature of things, this would by no means prove that the nature of things determines itself, or is not of God; for if the conception of axioms other than the actual be an absurdity, this but proves that the actual is the necessary sequence of the infinite perfection of the self-existent being. The conception of a universe wherein two plus two did not equal four, or wherein two straight lines could inclose a space, or wherein ingratitude were not blameworthy, is a conception of a universe absurd and impossible; but to conclude therefore that the universe is as it is because of a supposed necessity arising from a supposed nature of things which independently existed, is simply to separate wisdom from the wise, intelligence from the intelligent, thought from the thinker, morality from the moral being. What we recognize, in the realms of moral or natural law, as that which could not but be, we should recognize as logically connected with the

absolute perfection of the one being whose existence, and whose perfection, and whose *will*, rendered necessary that entire nature of things of which so much is predicated. The necessary existence of God settles every thing, leaves nothing conditional or contingent, determines all the axioms in the realms of moral and natural law. The nature of God being what it is, these could not but be as they are, and this is true of what are called the free and sovereign works or acts of God, even as of those distinguished from them as his necessary acts. This view in no respect interferes with the doctrine of pure and mere sovereignty; for the sovereign acts of God proceed from his nature as do those we call his necessary acts, for these were determined from eternity as fully and irrevocably as his necessary acts. When God says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," he assuredly means to set before us his will, in its utmost freedom and sovereignty. But this supreme act of free and sovereign grace is the act of God himself—an act unto which the whole nature of God (his will being included in that nature) moved him. That God might have done otherwise, in this matter, and yet have been the God he is, is a theory of well-meaning theologians—a theory inconsistent with the highest conception of God. That the saved deserved nothing, that *they* had no claim upon God, that there was no *obligation* upon God from without, must never be forgotten; but to hold that the will of God acted for our salvation when his nature did not require it, is to glorify the will of God at the expense

of a supposed nature of God. In fact we can know what the nature of God requires him to do only by what he, by his will, actually does. Freedom or sovereignty in God does neither imply, (a) any dissociation of the act from the nature of God, nor (b) any doubt or contingency as to the result. To attribute to God a sovereignty that does either of these, is not to honor but to dishonor him. There are, and perhaps ever will be, those who are unable to accept the doctrine that acts may be predetermined and certain from eternity, and yet be, in the fullest sense, free acts. There may be those who imagine that freedom, whether in God or in man, necessarily involves uncertainty. For such notions there is perhaps no effectual cure.

To "the nature of things" much that is admirable is ever attributed. If the nature of things be not what it is because God so determined, and determined by what he is, or what he does, determined by his necessary or his free acts, but, on the contrary, be something independent not only of the created actual universe, but independent of the being, the will, the character of God himself, and not only so, but something unto which God himself must conform, then it follows inevitably, 1st, that no praise is due to God for that admirable and beneficent nature of things which men so highly laud; 2nd, that there is a law unto which the being we *call* God is subject, i. e., there is a power behind the throne, one that rules not merely the creation but the Creator.

The absurdity of the conception of axioms, different

from those we have, is indeed recognized at once. This absurdity, it may be freely admitted, is not merely apparent but real; yet it by no means follows that the nature of things is the power behind the throne, or is self-existent or independent of God; for if the axioms in the realms of moral and natural law can not but be what they are, it is because God exists necessarily, and because he is what he is, and not because some vague power, called "the nature of things," dominates eternally in infinite space over all that exists, created or Uncreated.

Both Clarke and Leibnitz, in their notable controversy regarding space and duration, each indeed in his own way, connected space and duration necessarily with the being of God. In this they were assuredly right. Clarke makes space and duration, necessarily existing, attributes of God and therefore proof, "demonstration," to us of his existence. Dr. Chalmers confesses his inability to follow Clarke, and even ventures to assert that he could imagine everything, created and uncreated, swept out of existence, yet space and duration to remain. Leibnitz boldly maintained that space and duration had no existence except, the one as the order of relation, and the other as the order of succession of things.* The interesting point of agreement, between these two really great Christian philosophers, is that they *both made space and duration solely*

*"Je tenois l'Espace pour quelque chose de purement relatif, comme le Temps; pour un Ordre des Coexistences, comme le Temps est un Ordre des Successions." Leibnitz: "*Collection of Papers, etc.*," p. 57.

dependent on God; Clarke directly as attributes of God; Leibnitz simply as relation of created things; while the great Scotch preacher committed himself to the faith of somewhat independent of God, in fact a house wherein God might dwell but one he did not make, one that is his only by the right of perpetual occupancy.

Space and Duration, as well as all axioms in the realms of natural and moral law—these and the nature of things are all dependent on God, so that it is equally absurd to suppose these otherwise, or God not to exist, or not to be the God he is. Space and duration because they can not be thought not to exist are not therefore necessarily self-existent or existent independently of the Self-existent Being. Space and duration are what they are because God is what he is. In like manner all those necessary truths, axioms or relations of things which all readily recognize, are necessary as they are of and from God. The seeming inconsistency in these two respects in which space and duration are necessary, may indeed be to many not a little perplexing. If Dr. Chalmers was unable to see how space, for instance, could be at all related to God, if he imagined space to be existent independently of God, so that all being, created and uncreated, swept out of existence, space would yet remain; we need not be surprised if the multitude, even of learned men, continue to regard space as the house God found ready for his occupancy, and certain absolute axioms as necessarily existing according to which He must construct and govern both

the material and moral universe. In short, men will talk of "a nature of things," as though this were something whereunto God himself wisely conforms his government.

That this view so generally accepted, is utterly fallacious, I do not for a moment doubt. That the deception which leads to this view is an exceedingly subtle one, is most true. That this subtle fallacy can be so exposed as to be generally discarded, can not be expected. All that can be hoped is that minds capable of profound, careful and patient study, may be led to see and reject it.

The necessarily existing, the necessarily true, may be related to a whole that is necessary. The necessary existence of a part or of that which is so related, in such case, is not identical with the independent existence of such part or of that which is thus related. Suppose space to be, as Clarke calls it, an attribute of God, its necessary existence by no means implies its independent existence. If space be order of relation of existent things, as Leibnitz makes it, this necessary relation is not something established apart from creation. If axioms in moral and natural law be necessary, they are not, therefore, independent of that whole of which they are part, while, in both cases, they prove the necessary existence of the whole of which they are part.

The absurdity which includes all others, is the absurdity of saying, there is no God. This is the language of the fool, i. e., folly in this reaches its utmost height. But every notion of a nature of things or of space and

duration not of and from and dependent on God is rooted in this fundamental dictum of folly.

If the axioms which all recognize in the realms of natural and moral law, must be conceived of as, not only necessarily existing, necessarily true, but as being so *independently* of the will, the character and even the being of God, it then follows inevitably, 1st, That the universe of matter and mind is constituted, conditioned and governed by laws with which God had nothing to do. 2nd, By laws which it behooved Him to regard and conform unto. 3d., It also follows that not only the axioms, but all the deductions therefrom, are alike independent of God; for, without question, the most elaborate problems in geometry differ in no respect from the self-evident propositions except in the clearness and readiness with which we apprehend them.

The fallacy that deceives consists in assuming that what is necessarily true, is so independently of that higher category with which it may be necessarily connected.

We can readily perceive that space and duration can not but be, just as we perceive that two straight lines can not inclose a space, that all the parts must be equal to the whole, or that things which are equal to the same are equal to each other, or that ingratitude is blameworthy. Now these perceived to be necessarily true, it is thought they are independently true, whereas their being necessarily true but proves to us the necessary existence of that Being whose existence, whose perfections, whose *will*, originates, sustains and estab-

lishes all; so that the absurdity of supposing, for instance, space not to exist, or two plus two to equal five is that such supposition involves in it the supposition of the non-existence of that being whose infinite perfections determine everything.

Persons who think they can conceive all being, created and uncreated, swept away and yet space and duration remain, simply deceive themselves. Those who imagine they can, even in thought, wander back, not only beyond the created, but beyond the uncreated, so that, at length, they find themselves encompassed on every side with infinite space and infinite duration, with these alone, and recognizing these as necessarily existing, recognizing these and nothing else, imagine they have reached the ultimate, might, with equal reason, find that infinite space to contain geometric figures and lines having certain necessary proportions,—all the angles of every triangle equal to two right angles—and these necessary truths of mathematics might be assumed to exist independently and apart from all being, even as space has been supposed to exist independently and apart from all being; whereas axiomatic truths no more exist of themselves in empty space than actual triangles exist in empty space.

Given, the axioms universally recognized in the realms of law moral and natural, I affirm that it is not only absurd to regard these as existing necessarily, independently of all else, but it is folly not to recognize the fact that their existence proves at once (a) the necessary existence of a being of infinite perfections, (b)

and proves also their own necessary dependence upon him, or that they are necessarily true because he exists and is what he is.

All admit that the axioms, truths and principles prevailing in the natural and moral universe, are wise and beneficent. The most skeptical scientist will not even entertain the question: Is this or that arrangement in nature without design? Nor the question: Is the design an evil or malignant one? Science always assumes that there is design, that there is wisdom; always assumes that the end aimed at is beneficent. *Science* recognizes wisdom and beneficence everywhere in the universe, and even when unable to discover these, never for an instant, doubts of their existence, but presses on from age to age in search of the wise end and beneficent purpose. But often, like persons color-blind, *scientists* utterly fail to recognize the Being from whom alone these traces of wisdom and beneficence could come. Wise and beneficent principles or axioms could not originate themselves. The Nature of things could not be imagined to have caused these wise and beneficent principles. No rational person could seriously entertain the notion that any creature, or all creatures together, had anything to do in determining, for instance, the relations and properties of lines and figures. Whence then that marvelous wisdom which even the atheistic scientist recognizes in nature, and which he, no less than the most devout Christian, *believes* to exist in those instances in which he can as yet find no trace of it? To this the philosopher hastens to reply, "You

do not mean that God caused the three angles of a triangle to be equal to two right angles, or that it is at all owing to any determination of God that two plus two equal four, or that ingratitude is blameworthy. He *could not* have done otherwise. It must have been so in the very 'nature of things.'" "*He* could not have done otherwise!" If the philosopher had but given the pronoun its proper emphasis, had he meant simply that a being of infinite wisdom and beneficence could not have done otherwise, there had been nothing to find fault with. And shall this impossibility of his having done otherwise, an *impossibility* arising from the infinitude of his perfections, be so interpreted as to rob him of the authorship and the glory of that ever marvelous order of nature which we can never cease to admire?

In the realm of physical or natural law the axioms, truths and principles contain in themselves potentially and logically all that has been or shall be derived from them. In like manner, in the realm of moral law, the self-evident truths contain in themselves, and logically establish, every correct deduction or conclusion, even of the most practical kind and under the most complicated circumstances, that has ever been reached. In fact, the main business for us all is to educe right conclusions from the rudimentary axioms of morals; to decide and act, in every emergency and trial of life, in correct, logical harmony and accordance with axiomatic moral doctrines and precepts. Now if the nature of things, not God, furnish the axioms of natural law, and if the nature of things, not God, furnish the ele-

mentary truths of morals, then, all that is admirable, as wise or beneficent, in the realms either of natural or of moral law, is due to the nature of things and not to God. Logically followed out, the modern doctrine regarding the nature of things, leaves *no room*, *no necessity* for a God at all. This logical terminus not a few have already reached. Towards it multitudes are tending, it may be unconsciously but certainly.

It is this line of thought which has led to a phenomenal outburst of atheism, unparallelled in the world's history. It is Satan's master-piece of deception. Being deceived, our race was first led into transgression. But the great deceiver has learned much in the centuries of his experience in dealing with mankind. His deceptions must now be vastly more subtle than those with which he plied our race in former ages.

"The nature of things," if it furnish all the axioms of the natural and of the moral world, is really the source of all law. No one can have a just conception of law, or of the Lawgiver, so long as this latest Idol is set in the highest place.

That this Idol, notwithstanding its exceedingly fine workmanship, notwithstanding the high character, vast numbers, and lofty pretensions of its worshipers, will share the fate of "the gods of the nations," there can be no question. For "the gods that made not the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from off the earth and from under these heavens." Multitudes there are who do not hesitate to dismiss with contempt

the reasonings and conclusions of Christian philosophers such as Clarke, Leibnitz and Pascal—declaring them to be "words, mere words," while with boundless confidence asserting (a) that space is merely "the condition of existence," meaning the condition of the existence of all being, (b,) that it exists necessarily and independently of the Uucreated as of the created, (c,) that the axioms of Mathematics are necessarily true quite independently of God, (d,) that ingratitude is blameworthy, independently of the will, the character and even the being of God. This might be endured with some degree of patience, not unmixed with pity and even hope; but when educated and confessedly able Christian ministers hesitate not to assent to every one of the four assertions referred to, and do so in good faith, and without perceiving that in doing so they at all compromise the faith they are pledged to defend, it is surely time that some effort be made to expose a deception that in this frightful way evinces its terrible efficacy.

All necessary truth, all axioms in moral and natural law, however disregarded by multitudes, are evidence of the necessarily existent being from whom they proceed, and from whom they can not even in thought be rationally separated. The acceptance of these axiomatic truths is indeed required by the very constitution of our own minds as well as by that of the world external to us, yet are they none the less on that account of and from God. If this view be accepted we are constrained to confess that we are ever encompass-

ed with direct evidence of the supreme intelligence. It is reasonable to presume that the universe should be filled with such evidence.

The nature of things was indeed determined before the things themselves were made, but determined *by*, not *for* the Maker of things; determined by his will, not by his nature considered as apart from his will. An eternal self-existent nature of things determining alike for the Creator and for his creation, is vanity, "is a thing of naught," a mere idol of the brain.

Time was when a golden image erected on the plain of Dura was well suited to be the idol that all languages, kindreds and tongues should worship, "what time they should hear the sound of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer and all kinds of music."

The day for the worship of images of gold on plains of Dura has gone by. If men can now be at all induced in any respect to depart from the worship of the true God to the worship of an idol, it must not be one of gold or silver, must not be set up on any plain of Dura on earth. The idol for the present age must not be one that is constructed by cunning workmen, at the bidding, and by the munificence of monarchy. The idol of the present day, the only idol, the only *kind* of idol that men in this age can be induced to worship, is one that is devised and fashioned by the "best modern thought." And even this idol must be set up on a plain so high, so distant, so inaccessible that the worshipers shall see it but dimly and afar off. So also other notes than those of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery

and dulcimer must be relied on to call the millions in our day to fall down and worship. Space and duration eternally and necessarily and independently existing furnish the plain of Dura. Axioms, truths, principles of natural and moral law, or "the nature of things," self-existent and independent of all else, furnish the fine material for the image. The best modern thought, at the bidding of science, constructs the image.

To the worship of this last and loftiest image we are all now called—" a new god which neither we nor our fathers worshiped, a new god newly sprung up," one who disdains to contend with other gods for a place of equality with them, or for a portion of our earth,but who lifts his sceptre over the created and the Uncreated, claiming to reign eternally and necessarily over all that exists in infinite space.

If we can not be philosophers,if we cannot follow the reasonings of Christian philosophers, who, on rational grounds as well as scriptural, "give all glory to God," let us at least be devout believers of the Bible. Let us read and ponder the many texts of Scripture that expressly declare that all glory is due to God. Let us heed the declaration of the creed which assures us that "the scope of the whole is to give all glory to God." Reading and clinging to Scripture, let us refuse to "fall down and worship," even though the air be filled with music more lofty, more varied and more pretentious than that of "cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer."

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF MORAL LAW

LAW not only proceeds from God as its source; it has no existence except as presently and directly proceeding from him. Law is not that which was once commanded, or was written on tables of stone; but that which the Ever-living, Ever-present Lawgiver now commands. Law is from God and dependent on him in a higher sense than is the light of day from and dependent upon the sun in the heavens; for were the sun blotted out his rays would for a few minutes continue to lighten and warm our earth; but law exists not an instant apart from God. Whosoever deals with law physical or moral, deals not with law merely, but with God, of whose presence and power law is the perpetual demonstration.

Law as force and law as commandment, these are the two forms of law known to us. They are both directly from the will of God. Infinite power confessedly insures the inviolability of every natural law. Infinite power sustains every moral law. The authority of the Lawgiver is concentrated in every precept of his law, and the power of the Lawgiver secures that law

made known and addressed unto moral beings shall not be "mocked." That which could be mocked, i. e., violated with impunity, would not be law. Human legislators recognize this truth; for they never enact law without penalty, and they never consent that penalty shall be unsustained by the utmost power of government. If then there be law in the universe at all, there must be an infinite power, an infinite Being who ever sustains law so that in no instance can it be violated with impunity.

All beings and things lower in the scale than moral beings having free will, have the law which governs them wholly "implanted in the very constitution of their nature;" while moral beings are under law which is wholly unto them in the form of commandment. There is, indeed, in the very constitution of their nature, capacity for perceiving and obeying law when and in what way soever made known unto them, and this capacity creates an obligation to obey law; they are not law unto themselves, they have not the moral law revealed in the very constitution of their nature. The law for all moral beings is the will of God in commandment made known unto them, and not an inward principle. It is by overlooking this one grand distinction that a flood of errors has come in to deluge the whole world of human thought and judgment on this subject. Great mistakes in regard to this subject have been made by those who believe, as well as by those who reject, the Bible. The opposers of outward revelation ever confidently assume that *all*

law is in the subject of law as part of its nature. Inorganic matter obeys law that is part of its nature; so organic beings and things, vegetable and animal—no commandment unto these, all the law within them.

With great confidence is it asserted that "Man must in like manner be governed by law which is wholly within." No outward revelation direct from God can for a moment be admitted. This is surely the stronghold of skepticism as regards divine revelation.

Every skeptic lauds the law implanted in man's constitution, while despising and scorning any law claiming to be a divine revelation. Every errorist also glorifies the "inward light," and puts contempt upon the outward revelation.

Christian apologists have all along made a most unfortunate mistake in admitting that there may be moral beings who are not under law in the form of commandment, but under law implanted within them; that man at his creation had "the moral law revealed in the very constitution of his nature," that "he was law unto himself," that "he was *the* moral law unto himself!" So far from this being the case, the law, the only law, the observance of which was to determine his destiny, was outward revealed law. Moreover the sin, which "brought death into our world and all our woe," was one to which the inward promptings of his sinless nature, apart from revealed law, certainly inclined and disposed him. His sin consisted in making his own sinless nature the law of his conduct; whereas God had made His own revealed

will, His commandment, such law. The problem of the origin of sin, on any other view, is darkness itself. How a sinless being could entertain the first thought of evil has ever been a most perplexing question. If sin be conceived of as consisting in following natural sinless propensities, in disregard of outward law which in its very nature requires the denial, or the subordination of these; it is then much less difficult to conceive how holy beings might transgress. The issue was a necessary one. Given, creatures endowed with freedom of will, placed under law which, in its very nature, is the will of the Lawgiver made known unto them by revelation of some kind, it could not but be that the required surrender of the will should involve a frightful trial. All beings having law within them, or in the very constitution of their nature, were safe—safe because not exalted; but creatures made in the image of God, endowed with freedom of will, placed under law which is commandment addressed unto them, are lifted up to a position of utmost honor and of utmost danger—danger, too, inseparable from the honor. No being is holy, is loyal to God, is obedient to law, who merely obeys law implanted in the very constitution of his nature; no, not though that nature be pure and holy, as was that of angels when called into being, or that of our first parents in Eden. No act is obedience to law if performed merely from inward promptings, and not from regard to law made known as the will of God. Even if conscience could prompt to an act, however good in

itself, without regard to law as the will of God, such act could not be praiseworthy or rewardable. But conscience can never do this, for it ever binds us to obey law in what way soever made known unto us.

"Of the trees of the garden thou mayst freely eat." We, then, need a divine warrant for the indulgence of the sinless appetites of our nature. "Of the tree that is in the midst of the garden thou shalt not eat." A limit must, then, be set by divine commandment to the gratification of natural sinless promptings. Both the warrant and the limit clearly intimate that God's will made known to us, and not the mere existence of even sinless propensities, is law to us. Carefully considered, the whole transaction profoundly impresses on our minds the momentous truth never for an instant to be forgotten, *that law to moral beings is the will of God in commandment*, that sin is the transgression of revealed law, that is, of law in any manner made known to us as God's will, and that law is transgressed by any being, even a sinless one, making his own will law unto himself.

"Even Christ pleased not himself." This is the strongest form of asserting that no subject of law may please self. The existence of inward propensities and the opportunity for gratifying them are all that animals, mere animals require; for, they *have* law implanted "in the very constitution of their nature," they are incapable of receiving law in the form of commandment. The philosophy (?) which places men, in this respect, in the same rank with animals, is beastly

and horrible. Thitherward ever tend the philosophies of the opposers of divine revelation. The buffalo on the plains, are law to themselves, their nature, their appetites, their propensities, and the varied means for the gratification of these determine everything. The herd grazes, seeks water or shelter, as directed by inner law. Man, with his measureless superiority, if he also govern himself by mere inner law, and look not up to discover law as the will of God made known unto him, degrades himself not merely to the rank of the herd, but falls infinitely beneath them, and incurs wrath and doom that they do not; for in doing this he disobeys *law*, the *only* law, the only *kind* of law moral beings can possibly be under. The consequences of that philosophy, which makes man law to himself, have been horribly exemplified in the whole course of human history. Indeed this is the one grand mistake of our race, a mistake regarding the *very nature* of *moral law*, the fatal mistake of assuming that law to man is in his nature, is revealed "in his very constitution," or that "he is law to himself." This was the mistake made by our first parents in Eden. To this they were led by the great deceiver. The deception is in its own nature most subtle; in fact, the thinnest edge of the thinnest wedge, forged and sharpened for dividing our race from its loyalty to the throne of God, a wedge which has been driven, with horrid strokes and with horrid success, in all the centuries of the world's history.

To assume that man is law to himself is not merely

a mistake in the case of fallen man. It is equally a mistake, it is an equally frightful mistake, if made by unfallen man or unfallen angel; for, overcome by this deception, neither man nor angel keep for an instant the "first estate." And were it possible for "the spirits of just men made perfect," or for "elect angels" to repeat this mistake, that is, to loose sight of the will of God made known unto them, and follow, for one hour, the mere promptings of their holy or restored nature, (I mean their whole nature including conscience itself i. e., if the conscience should assume to be a guide without regard to the will or law of God revealed,) there would occur a fall that would cause the first to be forgotten.

Christ came not to do his own will. Christ did not make even his sinless nature the law of his life. That he had a "self" which he "pleased not," a "will," which he denied, a perfect human nature which he kept in perpetual subjection to outward law there is the fullest evidence. Had he yielded to the demands of even his sinless nature he had refused the cup in Gethsemane. The trial was, as to its nature, of the same kind with that of our first parents. It was a question of conformity to inward promptings or to outward express command. Christ's whole work was obedience to commandment. "Every word he uttered, every work he did, was by commandment. My Father which sent me He gave me commandment what I should say and what I should do; as he gave me commandment therefore so I speak. And grand as was his willing

priestly act of laying down his life; and only second to it in grandeur as was his kingly act of taking it again; both these acts of Zion's Royal High Priest were done in obedience to strict imperative command, statute and ordained. 'I lay down my life of myself and I take it again; this commandment received I of my Father.' Aye, at this moment he is acting by commandment, by the imperative law and obligation of official duty."* Christ saved us not by obeying the inward law of his holy human nature, but by obeying commandment which in its very nature required the utmost suppression of the utmost cravings and demands of even his sinless humanity. These found expression in the prayer in Gethsemane: "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me."

"Christ's life was a working out of the law, the putting of the commandments into a visible form. His life sustains the same relation to the commandments of God that the beautiful building sustains to the plans and specifications of the designer. The building is the plans and specifications put into marble. Christ's life is the commandments put into deeds. He says, 'I came to do the will of him that sent me. My meat and my drink is to do the will of Him that sent me. As the Father gave me commandment even so I do.' If we had the power of analyzing every thought to which he gave lodgement, every plan which he announced, every deed which he wrought, we would find in them

*The Atonement, p. 282, Hugh Martin.

as their very soul the substance of God's commandments. Solomon tells us that the religious life which he sets forth as the only true life consists in keeping God's commandments. What sort of life can be constructed within the lines and limits of the commandments? I reply, the grandest sort of life. We know what the commandments are. They are thoughts and purposes from the mind of God. They are great with love and foresight. We know how broad they are. They deal with the heart and discern its thoughts and intents. They command the obedience of our mental conceptions and purposes. They claim authority over all our words and acts."*

The obedience required of the first Adam, which he failed to render, as well as that required of the second Adam, which he fully rendered, was obedience to commandment. In both instances the obedience in its very nature involved the denial, not of sinful, but of sinless humanity.

Is there not in this a lesson to which we should give utmost heed? That our first parents were required, in but a single instance, to deny self and to render obedience to the mere will of God can not safely be assumed. The *tres plaisant* notion that holiness shall consist in following always and in all things the promptings of a holy, or restored, human nature, is one that prevails astonishingly and pleases wondrously the fancy of even sensible and not wholly ignorant people. The doctrines

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*Rev. David Gregg.

taught in Scripture, the facts recorded in Scripture, utterly overthrow this fond hope of being able at length to serve God with that which shall cost nothing. There was not in Eden any more than in Gethsemane, there will not be in heaven any more than on earth, the enthronement of nature with its sinless cravings and dictates. No; law retains its place, directs as to the exercise of all natural desires and propensities, fixes the limit, compasses man round on every side, so that he lives, moves and has his being in the all-embracing atmosphere of divine, outward law, or commandment. Holy beings choose indeed to please God, not self, and to this they are disposed by conscience or the moral sense, so that this constant self-restraint is due to that which is implanted within them, i. e., to conscience; but conscience in its noblest and highest estate, while it forbids self-pleasing, never for an instant assumes to itself sovereignty, but ever looks for, waits for the will of God. Conscience rules according to the law it receives from God. Conscience never says, I bid you do this, but always, God requires this. It may misinterpret, it can not repudiate law.

Conscience is too often regarded as a kind of microscopic Bible in the heart of man; as when we read in standard orthodox writers such declarations as these: "Adam was law unto himself. He was the moral law unto himself," or "The moral law, at least as to its essential principles, and as far as was necessary for the guidance of men in a state of innocency, was revealed in the very constitution of man's nature."

Adam was not law unto himself; he fell by seeking to be law unto himself. "The moral law revealed in the very constitution of man's nature" could not have guided him "in a state of innocency" to any act which would have been truly and fully significant of his subjection to the divine will. When Paul speaks of the heathen as having the law written in their hearts, and contrasts their condition with that of Christians who have the written revelation, he does not mean that the heathen are wholly destitute of external, or outward law. The conscience of the heathen decides according to law as made known to the heathen, in that vast and varied but imperfectly interpreted revelation of God's will which all the heathen have. Conscience so far from being itself law unto man, is that faculty which fits him for recognizing, appreciating and obeying law in any manner made known unto him; and, like the faculty of hearing or seeing, conscience requires for its action that it be furnished with the light of law, or the voice of God, which alone is law. The too prevalent notion that conscience has power such as would be fitly represented by eyes of such marvelous power that they could not merely see, but could furnish the light by which they were able to see, and not only so but could also furnish the objects to be seen, is sufficiently absurd. In fact many writers who have examined, for us, the conscience have reported as belonging to it originally, the revealed law which it had received; very much as if a naturalist, after examining the eye of a living animal, should report that he found in it trees,

houses, blue sky and distant clouds; whereas he should have reported that it had, of itself, nothing but the power or capacity for perceiving these, and this only on condition, 1st, that these objects were before it; 2d, that there were sufficient light in which they could be seen. Conscience, the eye of the soul, perceives nothing except as furnished with the light of law, that is the light of the knowledge of the divine will in what way so ever such light may be communicated. With this light the universe is filled. In some parts indeed it shines dimly, in others more clearly, but in no part is it wholly wanting; so that all are without excuse. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head; so that they are without excuse." "*Without excuse*" because of the light they have, means *with excuse* had they no light.

Conscience is the faculty of hearing. Law is God's voice whereby his will is made known to moral beings who have ears to hear and therefore ought to hear. God's voice, as law, reaches moral beings in infinite variety of ways. Indeed the universe is the grand auditorium wherein God ever makes known his will to all who have ears to hear; so that in no part of the universe is this voice unheard. God does indeed speak in and by the conscience, but, for this very reason, it all the more gives attentive heed to His voice as law

made known in commandment. Law, then, to all moral beings, is law "statute and ordained," is the will of God in commandment. To confound law of this kind, and thus addressed unto the subject of law, with that which is implanted within, as part of the nature of the being governed by it, is to confound things that are not only separated *toto coelo* and forevermore, but necessarily separated. If man has in him law which is part of his nature, so far as he is governed merely by such law, so far his acts are not praiseworthy, can not be called, in any proper sense of the word, obedience to moral law. In obeying such law he simply pleases self, he is law unto himself. The tendency is ever to this conclusion, in the case of all those who deny divine outward revelation, and hold to mere inward law for man. This is the logical terminus of that false theory. Law only and wholly in man's nature; no command from God; no revelation, i. e., no law, therefore, no transgression. The modern advocates of the doctrine of "Individualism" have boldly and distinctly asserted man's absolute independence of outward law, independence of goverment of any kind from without. Pages might be filled with the horrible, yet perfectly logical conclusions of these consistent and courageous advocates of inward as opposed to outward law.

Excellence in God consists in his acting in accordance with the law of his being; for He alone is law to himself; but excellence in every subject of law consists in conscious voluntary obedience to the will of God. Right action in God is a necessity, yet since this neces-

sity arises from the infinitude of his perfections it is, in the fullest sense voluntary and praiseworthy; whereas right action in the case of any mere creature, or subject of law, in order to be praiseworthy, in order to be in any proper sense obedience to law, must be action the opposite of which was possible, that is, the possibility of doing otherwise gives significance or value to the right action of every subject of law.

How shall moral beings be assured that they shall never disobey the law of God when, so far as their own constitution and nature are concerned, there is not only no impossibility of disobedience, but the perpetual possibility of disobedience is itself a necessity, and that without which there could be no praiseworthy obedience at all? This problem, which from the very nature of the case could not but arise, has, as we know by revelation, been solved in a way which at once glorifies the wisdom and grace of God and calls forth utmost admiration of all. Confirmation whether of men or of angels is due to Christ alone, to Christ the one only servant of God whose obedience is assured by his divine nature. Christ the divine servant of God is pledged for, and ensures the standing of all holy creatures. Saints and holy angels, not law unto themselves, obey the law of God and their obedience is praiseworthy as it is rendered voluntarily, while the opposite is ever naturally possible, and only impossible because of the power, grace and faithfulness of Christ who stands for them. May it not be that confirmation in holiness is that which Christ alone could bestow? Mere creatures

endowed with freedom of will, without which they should have been incapable of virtue, could not be absolutely ensured and confirmed in holiness and happiness by anything within them, or on the ground of their own stability. We might indeed admit that God could have extended to men or angels gracious confirmation in some other way than by Christ; but since we know of no other way, since we can conceive of no other way, and since this way is so fully revealed in Scripture, so glorifying to God, and so satisfying to all holy beings, it is needless to speculate about other possible ways of confirmation. God has "made known to us the *mystery of his will* which he purposed in himself, *that he might gather together in* ONE *all in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth.*" The fact that confirmation in holiness was necessary in the case of all orders of moral beings of whom we have any information, men and angels, and the fact that this needed confirmation was in neither case imparted as a *charism* or grace in the keeping of the confirmed, but was the result of a relation constituted between them and the one only subject of law, who by virture of his humanity was able to render obedience while by virtue of his divinity that obedience is absolutely ensured, may well teach us a most solemn and profound lesson regarding the very nature of moral law. It should quite dispel from our minds the fond, foolish, unscriptural and every way harmful sentiment that to obey the law of our being, to do our own will, to please self, may be holiness, may be all that is required of us. Moral law is in its

very nature the will—yes the "*revealed will*" of the lawgiver. It may be revealed in endless variety of ways but in whatsoever way revealed it must be addressed *unto*, it can not be implanted *in* its subject.

A moral being without free will i. e., "not capable of choosing, or committing any sin" is confessedly a moral being purely imaginary. Calvin concedes this, while he inadvertantly or rashly assumes that such beings might have been created, and also that they would have been more excellent.* A mere creature "incapable of choosing or committing any sin" would be a creature incapable of rendering any acceptable and rewardable obedience unto moral law. The not choosing or committing of sin is ever regarded as necessarily connected with the choosing and doing of what God commands. Besides were creatures so constituted that they could not but pursue the right way, could not but do the very things which law requires, what need had there been for law or commandment at all? To what purpose should there be strict law prescribing all their acts? Law as the will of another certainly implies that there be a revelation of that will; that the will which is to direct should in some way be made known. A being having free will can not be subject to the will of another without surrendering his own will. The holiest mere subject of law is endowed with propensities, appetites and desires which ever and directly demand gratification; if these are in any respect de-

*Calvin's Institutes, chap. xv. p. 182.

nied it must be for reasons duly considered and approved. A moral being destitute of that "self," that "will" to which our Lord refers—the self that he pleased not, the will that he did not—never existed, can not be conceived to exist. What are we taught in this life, by the discipline we are under, what is the net result of all that grace itself proposes to teach us, if it be not the choosing and doing of the right, when by the very constitution of our nature the choosing and doing of the wrong is possible; the denying of the demands of self that we may render obedience to the will of another; our saying from the heart "*Thy will be done?*" And "Thy will be done" always means, always takes for granted as preceding it "Not my will." Our Lord by his express words, by his life, by his sufferings, by his death, has taught us the true meaning of this prayer. If it were possible for any one to say "thy will be done" without having first said "not my will," the whole significance of the words would be changed. Not thus is God served either by angels or men. The will wherewith they are endowed; the self with its incessant and necessary cravings; the will with its innate and incessant aspirations; these render them capable of true and significant tribute to the supreme will. Nor must it be thought that the will or the self that demands gratification is at length extinguished or silenced. This cannot be. Christ's life of self-denial assuredly did not silence the demands of self so that in Gethsemane it ceased to plead for exemption from suffering. Ceased to plead? Its demands were never so

intense. Its appeal never before so vehement. Did this vehemency of the demand of sinless self detract from the value and significance of Christ's surrender? The existence and the utmost vehemency of these demands gave value and significance to that true triumph.

Let it not be thought that Christ's obedience in this matter was peculiar, anomalous, unique, and therefore not significant of the very nature of true loyalty to the divine will. This was indeed the *utmost test of loyalty;* in this case the surrender of self was most complete. But praiseworthy doing of God's will always and necessarily implies self-surrender, a joyous, indeed, yet a costly offering. The choosing of God's will rather than our own, in the nature of the case, implies perpetual surrender of self, perpetual renouncement of gratification. This surrender, this renouncement, is not loss, but gain, since God's will is not only better than ours, but is infinitely better, and this we must ever clearly see to be so. This surrender is not loss but gain since only by self-renouncement, by ceasing to please self we ascend from the low plane, a plane we occupy in common with the irrational tribes, to the higher plane of joyous, voluntary and accepted service of God; surrender and renouncement of earth for heaven, of earthly for heavenly joys. That there is bliss of a higher kind than gratification may be to the carnal mind incredible; that there is bliss so exalted in its nature that it cannot begin till gratification ceases may be a conception which the carnal never entertain.

Christ "counts it not dishonor to be under imperative commandment, and shall his members, though the regenerating Spirit dwells in them, claim an exemption from what the Son was not, from what the Son counts it honorable not to be exempt even in His heavenly glory. Shall believers, because the Spirit puts the law into their hearts, claim a right to act merely at the dictate of inward gracious principle, untrammelled, uncontrolled by outward peremptory statute? I appeal to Paul where he says 'The law is holy,' and adds, as if to show that it was no inward actuating law of the heart, but God's outward commanding law to the will: 'The law is holy, and the *commandment* is holy, and just, and good.' I appeal to the sweet singer of Israel. I find him, owning himself with joy as under peremptory external law: 'Thou hast COMMANDED us to keep Thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all Thy *commandments*.'"*

*Hugh Martin.

CHAPTER IV

THE WILL

As we can have no clear or just conception of law if we fail to regard it as merely and solely the will of the supreme lawgiver, made known unto all subjects of law, made known in commandment; so we can have no just conception of what constitutes obedience to law, if we fail to apprehend the truth that law, which proceeds from will alone, terminates upon and deals with will alone. Only by coming to a just conception of the nature of the will can we understand either law or obedience. The direct study of the very nature of the will is therefore a necessity if we would understand law as given forth, or law as either obeyed or violated. To give forth law is to give, in revelation, expression of will in commandment unto another, unto the will of another. To obey law is willingly to accept the will of another. When this takes place there occurs that which deserves to be profoundly studied. There is more in this transaction than careless observers dream of. It is only because will in its own nature was made capable of giving law that it is capable of obeying law.

The will is self-asserting, seeks supremacy, aspires to be above all. This is an inherent and essential element in the nature of will; and if in any instance it is brought to acquiesce in, accept and delight in, a state of subjection, or subordination to the will of another, it is always for good and sufficient reasons duly considered, and not because it sought or desired a subordinate place. Every being possessed of free will,(and there is no other kind of will but free will,)left to its own bent, and apart from external influences, would choose ever the first place, would seek to give rather than receive law. This aspiration towards supremacy renders the will competent to be the source of law, but it none the less renders it competent to be the subject of law and fits it to obey law. Every creature having free will is a source of law as well as a subject of law. There is no moral being but has a kingdom, be it ever so small, over which he has rightful dominion; and no moral person whether consisting of human or angelic beings in capacity of a government be it ever so great in power or vast in extent, but is a subject of the divine law as well as a sovereign in its own dominion. Will could neither give law nor obey law were it destitute of this noble aspiration. The utter extinguishment of this divine flame in the noblest subject of law would render it incapable of true and praiseworthy obedience.

Though this view of the will seems to me almost self-evident, I submit a few considerations in support of it.

1. Children invariably and beyond dispute do early,

uniformly and in a great variety of ways, give abundant evidence that they seek to be above all, to rule all, to have their own way regardless of the will, wish or interest of others. This confessedly universal tendency and effort to dominate over all, and the universal, and even furious, expression of dissatisfaction when these efforts fail, seem to indicate an innate and essential quality of the will. To maintain that this is a result of the fall of our race, to imagine that the demonstrative disposition and effort to dominate over all, to rule rather than be ruled, is owing wholly to the fall of man, to entertain the idea that but for the fall, children would have been wholly destitute of this characteristic, would indeed be an easy, summary and effectual way of disposing of this and related difficult problems. If there are those who can dispose of this whole matter in this way, it would be cruelty to disturb them farther with questions of this kind.

2. The whole course of human history—the conduct of mankind, after this first demonstrative assertion of desire and effort to dominate—points in the same direction. The will is indeed chastened, disciplined, taught, by many lessons, that there is a severe limit that it may not pass; yet chastened, disciplined and taught, its native aspiration remains, remains operative, influences, actuates, inspires the whole life; so that every one actually makes his will—the good in legitimate, the evil in bad and violent ways—dominant to the extent of his ability and opportunity. Moreover, seeking to rule over men, to be a true king of men,

crowned or uncrowned king, provided this be sought in legitimate ways and for proper ends, is ever regard- with approbation.

3. Some light may be obtained upon this subject by an appeal to consciousness. It may require a special effort, it may be a severe tax upon our honesty, it may for many reasons prove a peculiarly difficult task, but bravely and perseveringly attempted in the interest of truth, it can hardly be that there should be, in the end, utter failure to catch the true meaning of the voice of consciousness as regards this matter. We grow so cautious, so regardful of our reputation, so careful lest any voice from the depths of our hearts should betray us, that we scarcely dare to say to ourselves, or to put into definite shape, many of the plain every day utterances of consciousness. Let there be a group of children, *they* may say, may frankly admit that they *would* like to be kings, queens, presidents or emperors; an equal number of grown persons would say, "No, we have no such desires, we are content, we do not aspire to rule or to be above others." Ah! Do you not? Confess it, you would like to be dominant, to be above all. Were you given your choice you would not choose a second place. If any one imagines there is not in him any spark of ambition to be dominant in any place among mankind, he but deceives himself. Search among the ashes, and without doubt on the hearthstone, a hearthstone not yet absolutely cold, will be found a glowing spark that needs but to be blown to cause a flame that would leap towards the

throne of universal empire. "Every man is born with a pope in him,"—such was Luther's blunt way of expressing the truth that every one really would be dominant—a truth which consciousness, history and observation abundantly confirm. This pope may be an exceedingly repressed, and at length quiet, and even quiescent one; so small and shrunken indeed, that he may well hide himself among the stuff, so that only very diligent and thorough search shall find him out, yet diligent and thorough search for him shall never be made in vain.

I am aware that the testimony of consciousness can have weight only with those who have at once the ability, the courage, and the honesty to appeal unto, and interpret faithfully the oracle of consciousness. It may be remarked that it is not meant that the majority, or even that very many, actually, and in view of their entire situation, seek or desire to be dominant. All that is meant is that *but for reasons* they would actually desire and seek. Any one not able to penetrate beyond the actual desires, which prudential reasons and not the very heart itself have shaped and formulated, need never expect to catch the still small voice of consciousness. Such can hear only the thunder and the lightning and the earthquake. Perhaps the main reason men do not accept this testimony of consciousness is that this native desire for dominancy has been so perverted, and has led to so much crime that they condemn, not merely the abuse, but the very thing itself.

4. Man is made in the image of God. He is like God in that he *also* is endowed with will. This it is which exalts him and makes him god-like indeed. But God's will seeks and obtains supremacy. It might be, it is, maintained that the will in the creature, in its very nature, seeks, desires, and is wholly satisfied with subordination. This is judged to be what ought to be. It is thought that without this the creature could neither be holy nor happy. This is a philosophy that would readily and nicely dispose of this matter but for certain difficult problems that meet us. Holy angels fell. Perfect human beings fell; fell by attempting to rise to supremacy, by an attempt to lift themselves from the place of subordination. Now if will in its own nature ever and necessarily aspires to supremacy, both the reason and the manner of these falls we can in some measure understand. On the other hand, if the will in its own nature always and fully accepts the subordinate place, the problem of the fall, and of the fall in the precise manner of it, becomes dark exceedingly.

5. But it is thought that a will not seeking supremacy, would be better than one seeking supremacy. I answer, it would not be in so high a sense god-like. It would not be capable of rendering such tribute to the will of God. It is the existence of this crowning, ennobling attribute of will, that qualifies it for rendering a tribute to the will of the Supreme. The wills of all creatures from the highest to the lowest are qualified to give *true* tribute and loyal subjection to that supreme

will because they also are of the same order. It is the god-like in man that qualifies him to honor God by voluntary subjection to Him. No one serves God with that which costs him nothing. The loyal servants of God serve him with the costliest offering they have to give, even the complete surrender of their wills. Subjection to the will, law, throne and government of God is significant in the case of those endowed with free will, as it is not, and cannot be, in the case of any being beneath them. This subjection is voluntary. It is not necessitated by anything in the nature of the will. The fact that it is, in this high sense voluntary, i. e., not necessitated by the nature of the will, even in holy beings, gives it its value, its significance, its praiseworthiness, its acceptableness before God.

6. The aspiration of the will, disciplined, subdued, instructed, limited, as in God's economy of nature and grace it is and must be, redounds to God's glory and to the highest good of the universe. This view of the will as ever seeking the unattainable, may seem to some quite inadmissible. But let it be remembered that the seeking of the forever unattainable is just that which ennobles man and opens limitless vistas of glory and hope unspeakable, in the eternity before him.

This boundlessness of aspiration which belongs to the very nature of will, not only explains the history of man in all lands and in all ages, and at all stages of his progress, but it crowns and completes the heaven of his future. It is the key stone of the arch. To be forever approaching a never attainable end; is not

this what is set before us as the condition of blessedness and hope? If then, in knowledge, power and all kinds of excellence redeemed ones ever keep in view the infinite, the limitless; why should there not be a corresponding progress toward dominance? Indeed it might justly be argued that there could not but be such progress. Progress in other respects would involve this. What prominence is given to this in Sripture! "*Ye shall be kings and priests*,"—"*Ye shall sit with me on my throne*."—"*I appoint unto you a kingdom*."—"*Be thou ruler over five cities*."—"*Be thou ruler over ten cities*."—"*I will make you ruler over many things*." These and all like promises, aside from the specific meaning which by careful analysis, might be discovered in each of them, certainly assume, appeal to, and encourage, a native aspiration in all, an aspiration which is unquestionably towards dominancy.

Given a definite number of beings having free will—beings differing in power and rank, differing in every respect not inconsistent with the perfection of free will in each—given these beings and these only, raising no question as to how they come into existence, presupposing, as yet, no actual relation between them; each of these myriads of beings having free will; let the question now for the first time be raised, "Whose will shall be supreme?" Readily will this question be decided. The will of the Worthiest, the Best, the Highest, must be joyfully accepted by all. That this was determined by the very nature of the case, determined by the character and standing of these beings and by

their relation unto each other is most true; but it is also true that the enthronement of the supreme will by the choice and acclaim of all loyal ones, is not, thereby, forbidden, or its significance thereby in any degree lessened. A just choice is always, in this sense, determined beforehand by the actual conditions of the case. The recognition of these conditions, and the act of choice in accordance with them, constitute our whole duty in the matter.

But when many wills accept the will of one as supreme they all bow down to Joseph's sheaf, i. e., they all freely surrender what, apart from all else, belonged to each alone. The will in all created beings may be likened to flame which ever rises directly upward; in perfect calm the least, as well as the greatest, a pure and absolutely erect pillar of fire. If then the will in all loyal subjects of law bend in subjection to one supreme authority, one supreme will, such subjection is a true tribute only because in its own nature the will did not necessarily bend but stood erect. Prostration is significant, not in beings created prostrate, but in beings created erect and god-like, i. e., with free will. "*I said ye are gods*"—"*if he called them gods.*" "*Let us make man in our image.*" Only beings that can in this sense be called gods, can truly worship God.

Let it not be thought that this view is inconsistent with the utmost harmony. God by his infinitude in all perfections is fitted for and, if we may so say, deserves absolute and universal sovereignty. Every moral being under God is to have the place he is fitted

for. God's government excludes not, but includes, in endless gradation, the government and dominancy of all the myriads of beings in their order. Subjects of God's government are not debarred from royalty. Nearest to God, the highest subject of law, the Servant of God, the Mediator is most obedient and therefore most exalted. Nay, infinitely obedient therefore infinitely exalted—teaching us that the path to royalty is the lowly one, obedience. After him, and like him, all united to him, aspiring to, seeking for, dominion, shall reach the place of true royalty, shall be "*made kings and priests unto God.*"

Assuredly that which is sought may well be the utmost attainable; ever understanding that only by proper means, and when fitted for dominion shall dominion be given.

Thus even in this life, in the foremost nations of the world, the door is ever kept open before all, so that no place of dominancy, or supremacy, is ever out of sight. Kept open! Yes, and this open way is not idly or despairingly gazed upon, but boldly and successfully trodden; yes, here and now, whoso would be "ruler over many cities," "ruler over many things," let him deserve to be, and he is not left without hope. Whoso would in any way be potent and dominant as a true king of men; let him be "faithful in the few things," let him trade with the few talents,—he may be, he can hardly fail to be, a ruler over many things. These happy results, here and now, flowing from the free scope which the innate, inextinguishable aspiration to-

wards supremacy enjoys—why should not this aspiration, unerringly directed, lead to best and fairest results in the eternal world?

The Will free from Invasion and Responsible to God Alone.

"God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the commandments and ordinances of men." Noble "confession of faith." Yes, the least and the lowliest of mankind, the veriest waif upon the street, is *free* as to his conscience, as to his will. He may stand, he does stand erect and defiant against the whole world, intrenched in the impregnable though frightfully lofty citadel of real freedom of will. He is —for so God created him—in the image and after the likeness of God. He is—for so God placed him—*alone*, and free from invasion by seraph or demon. "Under law?" Assuredly. But what law so ever he be under, whether from heaven or from earth, it must be addressed *unto* him, and it is, it remains his to judge, decide and act, and while he, little, ragged, black, ignorant, though he be, judges, decides and acts, angels and demons, worst and best, mightiest to save or destroy, behoove to stand silent and powerless, silent, powerless and filled with awe and wonder and reverence—stand outside that holy of holies, whereinto not once, with, or without blood, entered, or can enter, priest be he never so high, save that one who is the High and Lofty One himself, who inhabiteth eternity, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, and who also claims it as

his sole perogative to "search the heart," aye, to "dwell" in it as his abode.

Moral law is the will of God in commandment, and it can have no access to philosopher or to waif save through the will. The will of God is indeed the source of *all* law. But the will of God as law, moving "the sun in heaven and all the stars," is POWER and not commandment; so the will of God as law, moving the other and more glorious *sun*, in the *higher heavens* that shall *not pass away*," and all the brighter "*stars that shall shine forever and ever*," is COMMANDMENT, mere authority, not force. Government by mere authority is the ideal government. It shall be fully realized nowhere short of the heavenly world.

The infinitude of God renders him the one who "inhabiteth eternity" and filleth immensity. The same infinitude is essential to his dwelling in the heart of the least and lowliest of those made in his image. May we not in some degree see why this is so? It was Pascal who said, "*We* are mid-way between the infinitely vast and the infinitely little." To most persons it may seem that we are very near to the one and very far from the other. Pascal says, "mid-way." All effort, all experience assuredly says never within reach of either. Even as the universe upon which the microscope is turned gives no sign that it is at all to be more thoroughly searched out, or discovered, than that upon which the telescope is turned; so if we look towards immensity or eternity, nay, if we look towards God himself, we at once realize that we are in the pre-

sence of the unsearchable; but when we look toward any one created in the image of God, must we not clearly realize that there is here also the unsearchable? For, do what we may, we can no more "search out" or "dwell in" the heart that God reserves to himself than we can search out or dwell in that immensity which God claims for his own abode. The image of God, like God himself, is unsearchable.

Mother, look into that pair of eyes that but a few weeks ago opened upon the wonders of the present life. "Thine?" Yes, thine, truly and in a joyous sense. Thine by right and title so holy and indisputable that Satan himself might blush to be detected in any effort to take from thee thine own. Thine, because thy very life throbs in every pulsation of the quick beating heart. Mother, thine assuredly. Yet, endure it, for it must be said: *Not thine.* Look once again in those eyes and feel and confess that there is near thee a living being, *thine* indeed as fully as any in the wide universe can be, yet God's and in God's care. God's in a higher sense than thine, and in God's care infinitely more than in thine. "A little *stranger?*" Yes, and in a deeper sense than they knew who called him so; for do what thou wilt, oh, yearning, loving, self-forgetting mother, even thou canst never enter the holy dwelling place which God with wondrous skill hath fashioned and furnished and fitted for his own abode. Even *thou* canst never enter in, for lo! it is, it *is* God's temple. Was it not even so of old? The cunning workmen who built the temple could not enter in; no, not the

priests themselves, save the high priest, and he but once a year, not without blood, and even he but as a type of the true High Priest whose right it is to enter into the holiest of all.

Even the mother with her mother-heart yearning to enter in to keep all pure and clean, is fain to stand near the door, but never enter in. Even she must know that her's is God's. To God she gave her own—not first at the baptismal font—to God she gave when God gave unto her. And now, as days and weeks and years pass by, and rosy cheeks are browned with autumn sun and autumn winds, she learns—not always an un-painful lesson—that what *was* her's, *is* her's, she can not hold, and mold, and guard, and fashion at her will. What solace hath she for this not un-painful lesson? What balm can cure her heart-ache when her boy, impatient of delay, joins his companions in the fray and frolic far away, hour after hour, day after day? No solace, no balm that earth can furnish.

Thy boy is thine and God's. Thou gavest him to God. Lift up thy heart to God, the God that dwelleth in immensity, the God that dwells with thee; and say, "Oh God, dwell evermore in thine own temple I have reared for Thee."

Sweet suppliant, thy surrender, not un-painful though it were, grows now and ripens into joy unspeakable. 'Tis better God should claim thy boy. 'Tis better God himself should dwell in that dear temple reared by thee. Even thy fond mother's heart could not so well keep out the evil and bring in the good.

God doth strange things— about him clouds and darkness gather oft. Shall it be recorded on the eternal pages? Shall the angels read it in the eternal ages? "There was on earth a mother who gave to God her offspring at its birth, and at the baptismal font standing, pale and weak, and prayerful, yet with joyous, brave, heroic, holy heart, '*took vows*,' with steadfast purpose and resolve to keep the same; and every day in prayer she gave to God, even while she lived; and as she closed her eyes for her last sleep, she said, 'Oh God, the boy I gave to Thee keep as thine own temple evermore,' and yet her boy—her boy—was—lost!" *No, no!* He *was* NOT *lost*, for, ere the dying mother's lips had closed, and ere her yearning mother-heart had ceased to beat, a voice came down, a whisper from the lips whereinto "*grace was poured.*" And, all the way from earth to heaven, the ransomed spirit to itself repeats the answer of her Lord: "*Great is thy faith, then be it as thou wilt.*"

The Will Most Completely Surrendered to God is Left in Utmost Honor and Freedom.

God, whose will alone is law, whose will we are required to make THE LAW *of our lives, to whose will our's must be wholly surrendered, ever leaves the loyal will in honor and freedom, and with wide and wondrous scope for its proper exercise.* The will is not enslaved or suppressed, but rather exalted to glorious liberty. God admits to "his pavilion" all loyal ones. They "*abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*" God is

"*The hearer of prayer.*" He conducts the universe according to his infinite wisdom, making "all things work together for good" to his own. The will, the desire, the whole desire of the loyal may be freely expressed in prayer to God. This expression of the heart's desire is itself a precious privilege. Jesus prayed in Gethsemane, "If it be possible, let this cup pass." The privilege of praying this prayer, even Christ prized. The reality and the significance of the free exercise of the loyal will, we may understand and appreciate, even though we are unable to understand how the mighty universe can be so pliant to the Supreme will that the expressed desire of the lowliest loyal heart may be "regarded." With the infinitude of God's power and wisdom full in view, let no one say it is incredible. It is God, not law merely, that is working in all things, and He "*worketh all things according to the good pleasure of* HIS WILL."

James Renwick, the last of the Scottish martyrs, *desired* that his mother might be spared the horrid sight of his hands "*nailed to the Nether Bow Port.*" He pleaded for this in prison. God assured him his prayer was heard. In his last interview with his mother he assured her of this. Mary Boyd, who lived a saintly life, prayed that she might not be a charge or burden to her friends at death. She rose from a quiet night's rest, looked forth upon the morning, then sank into that sleep which shall last till the trumpet sounds. These prayers were offered up from loyal, true and tender hearts, in Christ-like, holy, tender,

unselfish regard for others. Is it credible that the Ruler of the Universe should pay any regard to desires and prayers like these? It is not, unless a *Person* of of infinite power, *by law*, which is merely *His will*, governs the universe. All difficulty as to this, requiring change of plan, or interference with laws and forces now working, vanishes when we reflect that all was not merely foreseen, but pre-determined. If it be credible that the greatest event should be provided for, it is equally credible that the least should be. The greatest could not be if the least were not. Time is for us. What prayer God hears now He heard from eternity. God is not emotional. These and all like desires and prayers, with *all the reasons for regarding them, were eternally present to the Divine Mind.* The God revealed in Christ, not the God that human imagination constructs, is the hearer of prayer. We are asked to be content with the "reflex influence of prayer." "We cannot, indeed, pull the great vessel nearer to us, but we may pull our little boat toward the great vessel." Ah! Take away the direct, and you destroy the reflex: rather, the reflex never comes into existence except as it follows the direct. Baal's prophets had "reflex influence," but it availed them nothing. They "cried, but there was none that heard or regarded." Shall we admit that the same is true of all who cry to God, and pour out their hearts before Him? No, not Jacob alone, but all praying ones are brevetted Israel, for they all, *as princes*, have "*power with God, and prevail.*"

PART II

ATONEMENT

CHAPTER I

NO SALVATION WITHOUT ATONEMENT

The hope of salvation, or of exemption from limitless evil, without atonement, is a hope that is based upon the unsupported assumption that law in the moral universe, unlike law in the natural, can be violated with impunity, or that its penalty may, in some way, be mitigated or modified. Nature, as well as Revelation, does indeed uniformly indicate the one only way of escape for those exposed to evil from the operation of forces obeying law. But nature's teachings are, for the most part, unheeded or misinterpreted. What he is to do who finds himself exposed to evil from the operation of natural law, man readily and clearly sees. Knowing that law in the natural world is absolute, invariable and no respecter of persons, knowing that he is actually in the way of the on-coming power of law, he never waits to make careful estimate of the measure of his responsibility for being found thus exposed. He never debates the question of original or actual transgression. It is enough for him to see and understand that law is against him, and that law will not be mocked or turned aside from

its aim. At the same time he sees, instantly and clearly, that there is one, and but one, door of hope. It is not that law shall be suspended, or its penalties in any manner modified or mitigated; but that in some way there may be the *intervention* of some agency able to deal with the forces that are coming against him. In this way nature and Scripture speak to us with one voice. In both the reign of absolute and inviolable law is uniformly, and even awfully, proclaimed. In both the one only provision for escape is, not obscurely, indicated. The prevalent presumption that the case of the sinner is not necessarily hopeless, is justified by what is taught us in nature and in providence, as well as by a deeply rooted sentiment in the minds of all men who have ever risen to anything approaching a just conception of the character of God. But the presumption that the violator of law may escape by the mere non-execution of the penalty, is one that has nothing to support it. Whatever might be in store for the violator of law who should merely escape the deserved penalty, must necessarily fall short of salvation. Be it what it may, it could not amount to blessedness. The possibility of blessedness depends upon the possibility of satisfying fully the demands of the eternal and changeless law of righteousness. The hope which a conscious violator of law cherishes, that he shall, by mere escape from penalty, attain to bliss, or even escape from limitless and endless evil or unhappiness, is a hope that is built upon vacuity itself. The bliss he can thus look forward to is, to all rational minds, sim-

ply the blackness of darkness and eternal despair. No one whose moral sensibilities have not been frightfully perverted or impaired could possibly desire that bliss which is in store for a mere culprit who should successfully escape the penalty due to him. Multitudes of half-instructed persons, it is to be feared, see nothing more in redemption by Christ than mere hope of escape from penalty. Too much ground has been given for this horrible caricature of the way of salvation, by the many theories of Atonement that have been, with wonderful ingenuity and toil, arrayed against the one only theory which either Scripture, Nature, or Conscience can at all accept.

No salvation, no blessedness, no hope of exemption from limitless evil or unhappiness, is possible while the sentence of the law remains. This may be clearly seen by any person who will consent to look the question fairly in the face. Once recognized, the whole question of man's destiny is narrowed down to this: Can Atonement, in any way, be made? Can "*man be just with God?*" In fact, the question, Can there be salvation for fallen man? resolves itself into the question, Can there be atonement for sin? resolves itself into this one question and no other.

The momentousness of this question none can fail to see; for if no atonement be possible, there is an end to all discussion; we are face to face with utter despair. If our conception of law be such that, transgression having occurred, no atonement is possible, then are we not merely in the rapids, where frantic

exertions are not wholly out of place, but gliding over the smooth curve of the cataract itself, where exertion is manifestly useless.

The one ray of hope for our fallen race is the possibility of atonement. The more carefully and profoundly all the elements of the case are considered, the more clearly will this appear. Therefore, the question of atonement becomes the one question which outranks every other, and claims our most profound attention. Atonement, and eternal life. No atonement, inevitable and eternal death. No ingenuity, no device of ours can change the status. We may close our eyes and rush wildly to and fro, but Ebal and Gerizim remain in all their grandeur. And this is the situation aside from all question of the truth or falsity of any written word on earth. Law violated, no satisfaction being rendered for such violation, ensures condemnation —rather, the violator of law is "condemned already." His condemnation lingers not an instant. It comes not after, but *with* the transgression. It is not so much future as present condemnation that conscious violators of law should be concerned for. If not under condemnation already, they have nothing to fear at death, nor in the world to come. From this condemnation there is no possible way of escape or deliverance that does not include the entire satisfaction of law.

The prevalent notion that justice is but a morning cloud, which may be swept away by some favorable breeze of sentiment, is one which itself must vanish; while justice shall stand like the eternal mountains.

But many who do not mean to deny the existence of law, imagine that the Supreme Lawgiver does not always and necessarily administer law precisely as it is, but, like an earthly monarch, or even more than an earthly monarch, may dispense with the law, may relax its penalties, may administer law leniently. It is thought that to represent God as administering law always with exactness, is to represent him as a being destitute of those traits of character which are most admired in an earthly monarch. It is probable that there is no one misconception more prevalent, more harmful in its tendency, or, it may added, more inexcusable. Law which may be relaxed could not have been law that was holy, and just, and good. Law is not the expression of some, but of *all* the divine perfections. Law does not stand as a barrier to the exercise of the utmost goodness of God—a barrier which must be removed before mercy can be exercised. If, indeed, it seem to be terrible exceedingly that there should be, everywhere, law, absolute, exacting and unyielding, reflect how immeasurably dismal, hopeless, and chaotic would be the universe—if universe there could be—were law, according to thy mind, somewhat accommodating to certain violators? Bethink thee, O man, that just in this bracing, reassuring, all-regulating power of exact and invariable law is centered whatsoever of confidence or hopefulness there is to be found in the universe; for law that is, indeed, and that it is fit should be, terrible to evil-doers, is also a praise to them that do well. It could not be the one if it were not the

other. All the law-abiding owe every hope they cherish, as well as every cup of bliss they enjoy, to the invariableness, exactness and absoluteness of law. And even the conscious violators of law, were they clear-visioned, would look nowhere else with faintest hope or thought of good to themselves. It is incredible that the violator of law should have satisfactory assurance that the penalty would never be inflicted. The presumption that law would sometime claim and obtain its own, would ever detract from any assurance that might be given.

But conceding, for the the moment, that assurance the most explicit should be given by the Supreme Law-giver Himself, this assurance could not lay the foundation for peace and blessedness. For conscience would still be unappeased and unsatisfied, and would forevermore condemn. Conscience can be satisfied only when law is satisfied. Exact justice alone satisfies conscience; but exact justice is all that law demands. The dream of salvation by some kind of escape from justice is the vainest of dreams that mortal man can indulge. Admit that law could be kept at bay forevermore—its thunders hushed, its fiery rage shut up in the bosom of that blackest and broadest of storm-clouds that overspreads the sky, and meets evermore the upturned eye of every conscious violator of law; yet, who will give to thee peace of conscience? Look well to thy estate. Guard now the citadel of thy peace. Place at thy gates a guard of mighty ones, pledged to allow no solitary messenger

of vengeance to enter. Make thy guards invincible and incorruptible. Without, indeed, the thunders of vengeance mutter and roll, echo and re-echo, but thou art safe! Law, justice, vengeance—the hand of Omnipotence holds these in perpetual arrest!

Hast thou now assured peace, bliss unalloyed? The same Almighty Lawgiver who gave forth law to all the universe, law large and broad and written on every page of the great volume of Nature, as well as in holy Scripture, placed within thee Conscience, a perfect mirror, which reflects the whole law of God in what way so ever revealed; Conscience, which always says, Whatsoever the law of God commands, that do; so that what time the law from heaven condemns, the law within condemns also. Could the claims of the law from heaven remain unsatisfied, the claims of law within would also remain unsatisfied, and conscience could not but perpetually accuse and condemn. Conscience is indestructible. All there is of man, conscience destroyed, would be less than man. By atonement, or the satisfaction of the law, alone can conscience be satisfied. Conscience is justice. Law is justice. Neither law nor conscience has anything to do except inside the limits of justice. The empires of both are in all points coincident. Conscience may be, in comparison with law, as the very smallest, in comparison with the largest conceivable circle. But the circle of conscience, and that of law, are concentric; so that every radius of the one is also a radius of the other. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and know-

eth all things." "The spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, searching the inward parts." Conscience requires for its own satisfaction that law be satisfied. Conscience, in its very nature, will forever take the side of God's law against us as light is given to it. Atonement, so called, which confessedly does not fully satisfy law, can not fully satisfy the conscience. For conscience is not merely satisfied when law is satisfied, but *because* law is satisfied. If this manifest truth were not overlooked, not only could there be no hope of salvation without atonement, no hope of atonement by the violator of law, but no *dream* of atonement by any one not able to render, not actually rendering, full satisfaction to the utmost demands of law.

CHAPTER II

NO ATONEMENT BY THE VIOLATOR OF LAW

The opposers of the doctrine of the atonement, as revealed in Scripture, and maintained by the Christian Church in all ages, base their objection mainly on the ground that the law, in its nature, does not admit a substitute to act in the room of another, either in rendering obedience to the precept, or in enduring the penalty; and, therefore, the only atonement possible must be atonement made by the sinner himself; the only righteousness ever to be obtained must be his own work. This objection to the Christian scheme of redemption is the one objection which, in various forms, pervades the entire literature of the unbelieving world.

All admit that man is a violator of law. None have been able to show how man can make full satisfaction for past offences, nor how he can render perfect obedience in the future. Confident that atonement, to be made at all, must be made by the violator of law himself, and that obedience, to be acceptable and reckoned to him for righteousness, must be made by man in his own person, many deliberately prefer to rely upon an acknowledgedly imperfect atonement, by the sinner

himself, and a confessedly imperfect obedience, all his own, rather than upon a perfect atonement and a spotless obedience, rendered by another in his stead.

The proposition as stated above, on which objection to the atonement is based, assumes, as true, two propositions, which not only are not proven, but are without support. First, it is assumed that the violator of law, man for instance, can in some way atone for a past offence, and that he can, even in a state of unrighteousness, render acceptable obedience to the law of God. Second, It is assumed that law in its nature does not admit a substitute to act for another in paying the penalty due for crime.

These assumptions, so confidently made, are both gratuitous. They are the exact opposite of the truth. The violator of law can make no atonement, can render no acceptable obedience. On the contrary, law provides for atonement by any adequate substitnte. Law, as understood and administered by men, admits a substitute in every case in which an every way fit and adequate substitute is offered.

No violator of law can, in his own person, make atonement for such violation, nor can he thereafter render acceptable obedience to the law of God.

1. A single violation of law has rendered him unrighteous. "He that offends in one point is guilty of all." "Sin is the transgression of the law." Righteousness is not to be thought of as having degrees. As a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, the least conceivable departure from the rectitude re-

quired by the divine law is unrighteousness. The fall of our race is represented in Scripture as resulting from, or rather, consisting in, a single act of disobedience. The fall of an individual, or of a race, could occur in no other way. Before the one offence man was righteous; after it, unrighteous. Before the one act of disobedience he stood; after it, he was fallen. Fallen how far? Far as it was possible to fall; even from the plane of righteousness to that of unrighteousness. Deeper depths of actual degradation, ruin, woe, misery, despair, remorse, there might be, but more complete loss of righteousness, more complete severance of right relation to law, there could not be. Law is one. A living being attacked by violence to any one of its members is itself attacked. But law is one, in a higher sense than that in which the body of a living being is one. Law is one, not as as the body is one and has many members, but as the soul is one and has many faculties. The breaking of one precept of the law is breaking of the law, because the whole force of law concentrates itself in every precept. Every precept is a focus in which every ray of law meets. The authority of the lawgiver is in every precept of law, so that the violation of a single precept is the repudiation of the law. But law, as it is one, is not rightly apprehended nnless we consider its relation to the Lawgiver. Law is the will of God in the form of commandment addressed unto the subjects of law, not merely a principle of action within them. The supreme question is ever the question of subjection to the divine will. Law

can reach man only in the form of specific precept. In specific precept is the meeting of the will of the Creator and Lawgiver with the will of the creature, the subject of law. But the meeting of two wills is the meeting of two beings. The entire authority of God was expressed in specific precept; the entire loyalty of man should have been signified in obedience to specific precept. In the simplest precept addressed to the subject of law, a full and face to face meeting occurs between the Lawgiver and the subject of law.

Law is not to be thought of as something issued forth from God, which is found dispersed throughout his empire as a kind of all-pervading ether, or a subtle power existing of itself and apart from God. Law is from God as its source, but not from him in the sense that it is, or can be, separate from him. Law in every precept that reaches us comes fresh and direct from God: rather God himself, by the precept, comes to us. Law is not merely something sent from God to us, it is God's approach unto us. God's will, the expression of his infinite perfections, takes the form of law; that is, precept addressed to us. Law is not God; it is God's *speaking* unto man. Law is God's voice, God's authority addressed unto us in the one form possible to be nnderstood or obeyed by us, viz., precept.

The complete loss of righteousness is the just penalty annexed to a single act of disobedience, penalty always instantly inflicted, penalty which falls wfth lightning-like stroke; natural and unavoidable sequence and righteous penalty at one and the same time.

2. Law *requires righteousness of character* before it requires, before it can accept, as righteous, any proposed acts. It requires that we be righteous; not merely that we do this or that good deed. Nor must it be thought that law requires righteousness of character solely because this is essential to righteous acts. It is true, there can be no righteous act except by a person who is righteous. But our conception of the real demands of the law is defective if we fail to regard it, first of all, as requiring righteousness of character. The unrighteous are not only condemned by law and by their own conscience, they are disqualified for rendering any truly acceptable obedience to law, and much more for any act which should have merit as atoning for a past offence.

3. The obligations of the law are *continuous*, leaving no interval in which any act could be performed which could be regarded as atonement for a past offence.

4. The law requires of every subject of law *the utmost* he is able to render; so that no moral being is able to exceed, in any instance, the real requirements of the divine law. If holy beings can not exceed the requirements of the divine law, how can violators of law hope to do so?

5. Law is *mandatory* as regards the payment of penalty, therefore *voluntariness* is an essential element in the one case as in the other, so that neither passive involuntary sufferings endured, nor mere willingness to endure sufferings inflicted, but sufferings voluntarily rendered, can satisfy law. This fact alone ren-

ders the notion of atonement by the violator of law a manifest absurdity.

Law, even as administered by man, regards motive or intention so far as practicable. In a large class of instances it is assumed that those on whom law's demands come will comply with them only when and in so far as constrained to do so. It is assumed that the criminal will do all he can to escape, or if this can not be, to mitigate the penalty. This is regarded as a kind of reserved right of every criminal. The law which demanded voluntary obedience to the precept is regarded as putting forth no demand for voluntary payment of penalty.

The question arises, Can the law be satisfied with that which is obtained from a culprit by force and against his will? or, Can he be said to have rendered to the law anything, who not only did not design or endeavor to render anything, but who designed and endeavored to the utmost of his ability to escape law's demands altogether?

Involuntary sufferings not only do *not satisfy law;* they render *absolutely nothing unto the law.* The prosecuting attorney, the sheriff, the witness, the jury, the judge, the jailor, the executioner, may each be regarded as rendering something to the demands of offended justice and to the express requirement of the law; the criminal not anything at all. Law in its real demands made upon the violator of law is in no sense satisfied by this too familiar process sometimes called the paying of the penalty of violated law.

Law in its precept requires voluntariness in every instance. This element is essential to all obedience. When the subject of law becomes a transgressor, does he thereby change his relation to law, so that now his will is not under law? Rather, is it not manifest that a requirement of law must, in its very nature, bear upon the will first of all? A requirement of law can not be merely that something be suffered. It must be that something be done. If the specific requirement of the law be suffering, regard must ever be had to activity and voluntariness even in such requirement of law. In what sense can he be said to have fulfilled law who merely suffered, i. e., who was passive, i. e., who did nothing? How can the inflicting of suffering *upon* him without and against his will be regarded as fulfillment of law BY him?

Besides, if we look steadfastly at law, as it proceeds from its source, the will of the Infinite Lawgiver, we may clearly discover that it is, in its entireness, *Commandment;* and therefore voluntariness is an essential element in every case of conformity to law, whether as regards precept or penalty. The obedience of Christ, in his suffering for our sin, is thought of as required, indeed, by a divine commandment; but this commandment is by many regarded as arbitrary, exceptional, and unique, and not as arising from the fact that law in its very nature requires voluntary active obedience in fulfilling all its obligations; as well in the payment of penalty as in keeping the precept. Whereas the commandment which Christ received

was commandment to do that which law in its nature required of the violator of law, not commandment merely to place himself in a condition in which certain sufferings should be inflicted, not a mere willingness to be punished, but voluntariness and activity in doing and suffering what the law required.

It will readily be admitted that law addressed to all loyal subjects is commandment, and requires voluntary obedience. Law accepts of them nothing but that which is voluntarily rendered. Transgression of law having occurred, what does law require? what now are its demands? May the subject of law now discharge his whole obligation to law by becoming passive or even resistant?

By whom is the demand of law to be met? The violator of law by becoming such is in no respect released from the law as commandment, rather the commandment now becomes infinitely more exacting. What now is the real and full demand of the law? Is it not this: Pay that thou owest, *Penalty* first, then Obedience to the precept. Among men, indeed, law, to get its due, is fain to look elsewhere than the culprit, even to those yet loyal subjects whose wills are accessible and who are the deputed executors of the law. But anything thus obtained is to be credited to the willing subjects of law. If exactions by force from the unwilling were credited to them as though voluntarily rendered, the most abandoned of sufferers would, as the years, centuries and cycles of their sufferings pass, be gradually reducing the debt they

owe to the law, and this without design on their part.

Not mere willingness to suffer, but active and willing endurance, and this for the honor of the law and out of regard to what is due to the Lawgiver, satisfies law. Willingness of a *lower kind*, or on lower grounds, comes not up to the plain requirement of the law.

But how vain would it be to expect of the violator of law, unrighteous, and by necessity growing worse and worse every hour, such willingness as the law requires? This would be indeed looking for sweet water from a bitter fountain, expecting to bring a clean thing out of an unclean, waiting to gather figs of thistles, groping for grapes among the thorns.

Atonement by involuntary sufferings, is a manifest absurdity. The expectation, the dream of it is proof of man's blindness and infatuation. To turn towards the adorable Lawgiver whom he has offended, from whom he has withdrawn his allegiance, and while straining every power to escape the demands of the law, overtaken by some just penalty inflicted by the righteous administrator of law, either directly or in connection with the misdeeds of the culprit himself, with immeasurable effrontery to hold up in his face this suffering, thus inflicted, and make a virtue of the part he had in it, i. e., the involuntary suffering of it, as in any way, of the nature of atonement, is but to exemplify the desperateness of man's estate of depravity and the depth of his spiritual blindness. Do men indeed imagine that their sufferings for sin, justly inflicted, are of the

nature of atonement and satisfy law so that by these alone men, in this life, or in the next, may at length get back into favor and be even with the law? Yes, this monstrous absurdity multitudes declare they believe. This undeniable fact is the only excuse for or justification of an argument in proof of a proposition which the right-minded, clear-minded, unbiased accept as self-evident.

Atonement by the violator of law, since it involves the monstrous dogma of supererogation, and that by the consciously fallen and unrighteous, is condemed at the bar of reason.

The absurdity of the notion of atonement by the violator of law, can be clearly demonstrated from the nature of law itself, and from the estate of the violator of law as unrighteous. Such demonstration may have weight with persons not so readily moved by the assertion of man's actual inability to make atonement. The prejudice against the severe teachings of Scripture and of the orthodox creeds respecting fallen man's *inability* to save himself, or to do any really good work, is largely owing to the fact that this inability has been regarded by those who asserted and those who denied it as anomalous, peculiar, or exceptional, and not as arising from the operation of a well ascertained law which severe and exact science cannot dare to call in question: *No violator of law can possibly make atonement for his offence, nor can he thereafter render any acceptable obedience.*

The severity of this law is not even a shadow of a

presumption against it. For moral like natural law is characterized by utmost exactness and severity, and is beneficent, not in spite of, but *because* of this severity. When men find they can "take fire in the bosom and not be burned," it will be time to dream of moral government wherein rebellion, wherein a single act of rebellion, may be allowed to pass unvisited with deserved penalty. From such government noble and heroic souls might well pray to be delivered. The significance of obedience, the motive to obedience, the very virtuousness of obedience, must necessarily vanish under any government in which rebellion involves no loss of standing, works no forfeiture of right or privilege. Government with praise for them that do well, government with "rewards of merit," and with these alone, ever finds, as it deserves to find, its praise contemned, and its rewards of merit despised and trampled under foot; nor is its praise any the less contemned, nor are its rewards of merit any the less despised when mere threatenings devoid of terror are conspicuously arrayed over against them. "*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" This were indeed idle threatening were it true that man after transgression were spiritually alive and able, not merely to render acceptable obedience, but to make atonement.

Atonement by the violator of law is the castle in the air. Into this castle neither man nor devil shall enter. Sound of footstep shall never be heard on its threshold, nor voice of song in its halls. Silence, eter-

nal silence reigns in this castle from foundation to turret. It is the mockery of fools for evermore; this only and nothing more.

CHAPTER III

SUBSTITUTION NORMAL IN LAW

Realizing that there is an eternal and changeless law or standard of righteousness which proceeds, not from a supposed impersonal and self-existent "Nature of things," but from the "one only living and true God," as his will in commandment addressed always and necessarily unto the subject of law; realizing that all men, as violators of law, are without hope of salvation except by atonement, and that being unrighteous they are wholly incapacitated for making atonement; the question, *Can atonement be made by a substitute?* becomes a question deserving and demanding most profound attention. For if atonement *by* the sinner be a manifest impossibility, atonement, perfect atonement *for* the sinner is also an impossibility, unless substitution be a normal provision of law, unless law in its own nature provide for substitution and for atonement thereby. But law, in its whole range and extent, and in all the ways in which it is made known to us, reveals wondrous provision for substitution, which at once opens the door of hope to the fallen, and the door of opportunity to the unfallen.

There are, indeed, many who are esteemed orthodox and evangelical who conceive of the scheme of redemption, as something we owe the exercise of the "dispensing power," to the "relaxation of the law" on the part of the Supreme Lawgiver. It is assumed that in accepting Christ as our substitute to make atonement for us, there was a "relaxation of the law," "a high exercise of the dispensing power" or "of sovereign prerogative in substituting person for person;" the administrator of law causing it to yield somewhat its demands in admitting any substitute, even the most perfect, even Christ Himself; and that this was so great a "departure from the ordinary course of justice" that it could not but have a "most injurious effect in weakening the sense of moral obligation were it often repeated," and that the work of Christ in our behalf, since it was not what the law demanded, since it was "an equivalent and not the very thing demanded," "did not thoroughly discharge the obligation," "might have been rejected," but "was accepted" and was "regarded as a satisfaction." This is fatal to the doctrine of atonement. For if mercy may be shown without atonement, atonement was not necessary, and Christ died in vain.

Law in its own nature provides for, admits and is fully satisfied with an adequate substitute. Law admits a substitute in every case in which an every way adequate substitute is offered, whether to render obedience to the precept, or to meet the penalty for violation of law. This is true of law as understood and adminis-

tered by men in all ages and in all lands. Substitution among men is indeed confined to a narrow limit, but this is wholly owing to the fact that man is not qualified to be a substitute for his fellow-man, except in those cases in which the obligations he is required to meet, whether fulfilling the precept or suffering the penalty, be such that he may assume, meet and discharge them in consistency with his already existing obligations and duties. Although restricted in this way, and for this manifest reason, substitution true and proper has ever been familiar to all men. The innumerable and varied exemplifications of substitution do abundantly prove that substitution is admissible, is provided for in the very nature of law. For the same principles which prevail in the lowest, prevail also in the highest spheres of the vast empire of law.

Law, as understood and administered by men in all lands and in all ages, has provided for and admitted substitution in at least the following four classes of instances: 1st. Work for the public benefit, required by law, of able and qualified citizens within the limits of a certain age, may be performed by any substitute who is *free* from like obligation, *willing*, and *able*.

2. By universal consent even military service required for the defense of the country, may be rendered by any substitute offered who is himself free from the same obligation, who is, for any reason, willing and ready to act as a substitute and is able to perform the service required. Such substitute entering the ranks,

should he fall in the first engagement, nothing more is required of him in whose behalf he enlisted. "His labors, his dangers, his wounds, his death, are vicarious," and do fully satisfy the requirements of law, as law has in all ages been understood and administered by men.

3. Even in the case of *crime*, law, as understood and administered by men in all lands, provides that the penalty may be met by a substitute, in all cases in which the penalty prescribed is such that a substitute may meet it consistently with the obligations he is already under.

4. So also in the case of *debt*, which is obligation unto law, a substitute is always admitted. A surety, who is always a true and proper substitute, when he discharges the obligation does "*ipso facto*" release the debtor and fully satisfy law.

In each of the above four classes of instances adduced there is undeniable substitution. The wonderful fact, deserving more respectful and more profound attention than it has hitherto received, whether by believer or unbeliever, is that in all these cases according to the judgment of mankind with as yet no dissenting voice, it is admitted that there is *entire satisfaction of law*. No one has cried out that law and justice were cheated, the innocent taken and the guilty allowed to escape. The innocent and they alone can be taken. Innocence, so far as that one matter is concerned, is essential to all suretyship or substitution.

But every objection raised against the doctrine of

Christ's substitution might with equal reason be brought against every instance of substitution among men. There is no principle involved in the substitution of Christ, that is not found in substitution as exemplified among men.

Objection to the substitution of Christ arises from the fact that his work in its glorious perfection cannot readily be apprehended; while that of the surety for debt can be clearly seen. We can readily see how a surety may fully satisfy the law by meeting the requirements of a given bond or note, but with great difficulty, and *never*, without heavenly illumination, can men be brought to see clearly that *Christ quite as fully satisfies all we owe unto the law of God* as a surety satisfies a given obligation bond or note.

The satisfaction rendered by Christ no one of the saved can fully comprehend. The ransom price paid for our redemption God alone can fully estimate; but all the saved should know and understand that this satisfaction is every way perfect, and they may be all the more convinced that it is perfect because they are unable to comprehend or estimate it. If the satisfaction which Christ offers could be fully comprehended or estimated by men, it would fall short of what God's law requires. Even those denominations that in their doctrinal and theological works most furiously assail the "Satisfactionists" for maintaining in their creed that "Christ did make a proper, real and full satisfaction to God's justice" in behalf of his redeemed, cannot repress the Christian sentiment of the millions of

their own people, for they will sing: "*Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe.*" This is the satisfaction theory in all its length and breadth. This voice of the Christian heart,—a voice that would never have been heard echoing and re-echoing through Christendom, but for what Dr. Hodge calls a "happy sacrifice of logic"—is as the voice of many waters; so that the shrill discordant notes of the logical and consistent advocates either of the "governmental," or the "moral influence" theory, are scarcely distinguishable when this grand anthem swells up from the deep sea of Christian faith and Christian *experience.*

SECTION FIRST

Obligation of Law always upon the Person

Obligation of law is always upon the person and can be discharged only by the person on whom it originally rested, or by one who consents to assume his place and become his substitute. Turrettine and theologians after him to our day have maintained that there is an essential difference between substitution in the case of suretyship for debt and substitution for crime. "This distinction holds between a pecuniary and a penal indebtedness. For in a pecuniary debt the payment of the thing owed *ipso facto* liberates the debtor from all obligations whatsoever, because here the point is not *who pays*, but *what is paid.* Hence the creditor, the payment being accepted, is never said

to extend toward the debtor any indulgence or remission, because he has received all that was owed him. But the case is different with respect to a penal debt, because in this case the obligation respects the person as well as the thing; the demand is upon the *person who pays* as well as the *thing paid;* i. e., that the penalty should be suffered by the person sinning; for as the law demands personal and proper obedience, so it exacts personal enduring of the penalty."*

"Hence pecuniary satisfaction differs from penal thus: In debt, the demand terminates upon the thing due. In crime. the legal demand for punishment is upon the person of the criminal".†

Debt is obligation upon the person as fully and manifestly as is obligation in the case of penalty for violation of law. The point is always not merely "*what is paid*," but "*who pays.*" Debt can be paid only by the debtor, or by one who becomes his substitute or surety and thereby becomes the debtor. Loose and untenable notions have been held and taught regarding this matter, by persons high in place. It is a mistake to suppose that money, coming from what quarter it may, pays a debt. No amount of money legally discharges a debt unless it come from the debtor himself, or from some one who offers himself as the substitute of the debtor, in which case *he becomes the debtor.* Should it rain sovereigns from morn till night, the note held by the creditor would be unsatisfied. Money given

*Turretin, Locus XIV. Quaestio 10. †The Atonement, p. 36. Hodge.

to pay a debt must be given by one who is a substitute —one who in reality takes the place and acts in the room of the debtor, i. e., one who voluntarily becomes the debtor. Any one desiring to pay a debt for another shall never be able to find any *other way* of doing this but by consenting to be a true, proper and *real substitute* for the one whose debt he would pay, a substitute in the fullest sense of the term, so far as that one matter is concerned. To sign an obligation which begins "We or either of us promise to pay" is to give formal consent by covenant engagement, to be regarded and dealt with as a substitute. To endorse a note is to consent to stand as a substitute in the very place where the *full weight* of the obligation falls. If this be not substitution then substitution is impossible.

That there is true and proper substitution in every case in which a debt is paid by any other than the original debtor, even though the formalities of constituting this suretyship, involving substitution, be of the simplest kind—and such suretyship can never be effected and debt be paid by another without formalities which do clearly signify agreement and the assuring of obligation—cannot be denied by any person who candidly and carefully considers this matter. Let thousands of persons lavish money most liberally upon the holder of a given note or bond, till by their bounty he is made the richest man on the continent; let no one of them indicate in any way, for whom, or in whose behalf, this is done; *the debt is not paid.* Money does not pay debts, it is money *from* a certain

definitely named party, viz.: the debtor, or his substitute, who in this case is regarded and treated as the debtor, who, in fact, becomes the debtor. To accept payment from any one who is not *the debtor*, either originally or by consenting to become such, would be manifest injustice. The party *from whom* the money is to come is always quite as definitely and unalterably fixed in a legal note, as the party *to whom* the money is to be paid. If Turrettine overlooked this it simply proves that "*Homer may nod.*" In fact it would be no more fatuous to maintain that debt might be paid by the debtor, giving to *any body* the amount of money called for in the note, than to maintain that debt might be paid by the creditor's receiving money from *any body* who had money to spare. The party *to whom* and the party *from whom* the money must come are clearly defined. The limit, or restriction, is the same in the one case as in the other. To say that, in the case of debt the obligation is not upon the person, is a gross mistake. Turrettine was in this matter as greatly mistaken as he was in maintaining that mill-ponds would all be emptied were it true that the earth revolved on its axis. To say that debt can be paid by any other than the debtor, or some one who consents to take his place and act, so far as that one matter is concerned, as his substitute, formally consenting to become the debtor, is to mistake the whole subject, and to *misinterpret* the facts and usages sanctioned by the unanimous verdict of mankind.

In the last analysis sin and debt agree; not merely

in the sense that in the one case as in the other there is obligation to the law, but that the obligation in the one case as in the other arises from the witholding from the law what was due. That which the sinner and the debtor owe to the law is not merely something which ought to be paid, but which *ought to have been paid*, i. e. both the sinner and the debtor are under condemnation of law. Legal condemnation falls quite as promptly and as unerringly upon the debtor as upon the sinner. From this legal condemnation, whether of the debtor or of the sinner, there is but one way of deliverance, viz.: the satisfaction of the law.

In the Lord's prayer we read, *Forgive us our Debts.* Why this word if sin be not debt? That this is deeper debt than that the wealth of this world can pay—debt of another kind so that material wealth can pay no part of it—is most true; but because it is debt so great shall we say it is not debt at all? Debt which can be paid with money might rather be called the shadow, while this other, which only something infinitely more precious than money can pay, is the substance.*

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*A few weeks ago, and after the manuscript of this volume was prepared, it was my privilege to meet with the admirable work on Representative Responsibility, and to find in it a line of thought which coincides in many respects with that in which I had been led:

"Very strong exception has been taken to the prevailing view of atonement, that it is presented in the light of a *commercial transaction.*"

"The fundamental element in both classes of relation is value. And value has both a moral and a material reference. Nor is it rightly to be assumed that the material is the original and precedent reference, and only analogically applied to the moral. May it not be that as redemption transcends all other interest in importance in this world of ours, and occupies such a place of worth and dignity in the gov-

Turrettine admits that substitution, in the case of debt, is a normal provision of law. He denies that it is normal or admissible except by exercise of sovereign prerogative in the case of crime. The ground of this distinction is that obligation in the case of debt is not upon the person. By making this the ground of the distinction it is surely conceded that this ground removed the distinction would disappear. It has been clearly shown that obligation in the case of debt is upon the person precisely as in the case of crime, and that the sole difference consists in the fact that the obligation in the one case is of such nature that man is competent to assume and fully discharge it, while in the other it is such as no mere man can possibly assume and fully discharge.

The fact that substitution, in the case of crime, such as could fully satisfy God's law was, in the nature of the case, impossible for mere man led to the unwarrantable and wholly illogical conclusion that it was abnormal, inadmissible and wholly unprovided for in the nature of law, and that it required the exercise of sovereign prerogative, "a relaxation of the law," "a dispensing in some respects with the law;" whereas the vast gap between such substitution as mere man may furnish, and that furnished by Christ argues nothing against the normal provision of law or its *ever-readiness for any and every truly adequate substitute.*

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ernment of God, that the moral elements which belong to it pervade the whole economy, are designedly incorporated with it, therefore to be found everywhere in all human relations; and that the element of value enters into all human transactions, and is found inwoven in the constitution of the human mind?"
Representative Responsibility, p. 177, Rev. Henry Wallace.

The distinction between substitution provided for in the very nature of law, and substitution imposed upon law by mere prerogative, is not merely a distinction in name. It is real and momentous. It transforms one's whole view of redemption. It opens the way for salvation by atonement according to the essential, absolute unchangeable requirements of law. It permits us to regard the Great Atonement as a Satisfaction so complete that there could be no need, no room for the relaxation of law that it might be accepted.

SECTION SECOND.

Imputation of Legal Obligation and of Legal Righteousness.

In every case of payment of debt by a surety there is not only true and proper substitution, but there is *imputation* in the fullest sense of that term. To impute to any one is simply to charge to his account. This is all there is of imputation. A debt is ordinarily imputed to the debtor, but this is not because there is, in the nature of the case, any necessity that it should be so imputed. In instances innumerable the imputation is, for various reasons, to another. "*Set that to my account*," is a voice that, to the credit of mankind, has often been heard. From the instant in which a debt is incurred up to the instant of actual payment it may, at any time, be imputed to any one

freely consenting thereto. When any one pays a debt for another the entire obligation is laid upon *him*, the entire obligation is assumed and *discharged* by him. It must be remembered that the obligation is strictly a legal obligation.

But there is in this transaction another imputation. As debt is imputed to the surety or substitute, the discharge or release is imputed to the debtor. The release or receipt is righteousness perfect and complete before the law, so far as that one matter is concerned. The receipt or the cancelled note is *the* righteousness of the former debtor before the law. It is imputed to him. It is his "imputed righteousness." We have then in this transaction, so familiar to all, a clear case of substitution, of imputation of legal obligation, and imputation of legal righteousness. In no creed in Christendom can "substitution" and "double imputation" be found more clearly and distinctly set forth. That the principles on which these are admitted are principles which prevail in the entire range of law, there is no reason to doubt. In the moral as in the natural world, the greatest as well as the least results are attained on principles common to both. Nor is there any good reason for enshrouding with mystery these simple and plain principles because of their application to matters of solemn and transcendent interest.

Substitution carrying with it "double imputation," whether in the case of an ordinary debt, or in the case of "*Our Debts*" referred to in the Lord's prayer, always

and necessarily creates new relations and new obligations. These deserve to be carefully studied.

The rescued debtor owes to him who became his surety a deep and inextinguishable debt of gratitude. This all right minded persons at once recognize. But this *new* obligation is *not a legal* obligation. The most talented lawyer would not assume to put it into legal form. No Legislature has ever proposed to enact a law by which a surety might afterwards recover from the original party for whom he acted. Surely this has not been for want of deep conviction of real obligation, but because even average legislators were able to see that this obligation, though sacred and weighty, was not a legal obligation. They have therefore allowed it to stand in all its weight and sacredness. It is a true and striking type of our obligation to Christ who delivered us from the infinite debt we were under. Even the befriended debtor is "*not under law, but under grace*," as are, and must be forevermore, all the redeemed.

Suretyship and Reinstatement.

Perfect suretyship, whether we regard the supreme instance and exemplification of it in the work of Christ in our behalf, or the most common and familiar instances of it as exemplified among men, is always and manifestly suretyship which, *in its own nature, secures and necessitates the reinstatement of every one in whose behalf it is undertaken.*

An obligation not yet matured is in common lan-

guage called debt. Strictly speaking, it is not debt. Debt begins only after the maturity of the note or bond. Overlooking this important distinction leads to confusion. The satisfaction of debt by a surety is a real satisfaction before God and before law, only by our assuming the satisfaction to have been made by one every way adequate,—only by assuming that the satisfaction is made by one who is right at heart. It is only by assuming this that the payment of debt by a surety can be considered typical of Christ's perfect atonement. Melchisedec "without father and without mother, without beginning of days or end of life," was in this respect qualified to be a type of Christ, as was no other; so debt, ostensibly, and so far as man can see, paid, can be typical of Christ's perfect payment of the debt we owe to God's law. The type is all the more perfect, as a type, in both instances because of *that which is left out of view.* In fact, it is only because of what is left out of view, that in either case the type is true and significant.

It is wholly because these considerations are not regarded that men object to the evangelical scheme of salvation as mercenary. If we allow ourselves to accept the "*plus plaisant*" notion that the mere giving of the required sum of money called for in the bond without regard to motive, discharges the obligation of the debtor, the whole obligation to the law, we may then, indeed, be shocked at the comparison of Christ's work with payment of debt. It would then, indeed, be mercenary. But Christ's Satisfaction of God's law

is like the surety's satisfaction of human law, when said surety pays the debt to the full. As the full amount of money called for in the bond satisfies fully the law as it is, and as it must be administered by man; so Christ's perfect obedience satisfies the whole debt, the entire obligation the sinner was under to the law of God.

But is law complied with, and in strict language fully satisfied, when debt is not paid as it becomes due? Although a *creditor* accept payment after maturity, it is not therefore to be supposed that *law* is satisfied. This important consideration has often been overlooked. Debts, whether consisting of bonds not yet matured, or notes past due, have been treated as if they ranked together; whereas he cannot be said to have ever been in debt, who has always met promptly and fully every obligation, making full payment at maturity. He has never offended, has never fallen under condemnation of law. The law has never had anything against him. He has, so far as that matter is concerned, *kept even with the law;* he neither has needed to make atonement, nor has he been in condition to need that atonement be made for him by any substitute or surety. Not so with one who has allowed a note to mature. That instant law condemns him. That instant he is under law, condemned by law and by conscience; then, indeed, atonement is required, then a surety is needed, even then, strictly speaking, the surety must be ready instantly to meet the matured note, so as to prevent *legal condemnation.*

A perfect and every way adequate surety is not one who can be in the end relied on to pay, it may be days or weeks after maturity, the full amount called for in the bond, but one who meets the obligation at maturity. Short of this, the law in its strict requirement is not met. The fact that Christ came in the fulness of time, and that His sufferings and death, His obedience unto death, was four thousand years after the Fall, is not to be regarded as a falling short of the requirements above stated for perfect suretyship. Christ is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God calleth the things that be not, as though they were. With God one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The efficacy of Christ's atonement depended not upon the period of time in which He offered himself up. Christ's payment of the penalty was a payment not in any sense delayed, but one that met instantly the demands of the law. Even among men a promise to pay is often regarded as payment; if the one making the promise be reliable, then the promise itself has all the efficacy of payment—is payment, is so accepted and regarded. But the covenant engagement of Christ rendered His sufferings and death a sure ground for the release of all represented by Him, just as though these had already taken place.

To satisfy fully the law, the obedience and sufferings of Christ must fully ensure the reinstatement and restoration to obedience of His redeemed. If this most important element in the case were not left out

of view, there would be no room for much of the seemingly plausible objection raised against the substitution of Christ. Suretyship that does not necessitate the reinstatement of him in whose behalf it is undertaken, is fatally defective. Suretyship that seeks only to get hold of the bond and tear it to pieces, but cares not for the debtor, is not perfect suretyship; such suretyship does not satisfy law, does not retrieve all that was lost.

If we accept this view that in the very nature of the case a true and perfect surety, a proper and real substitute, fully satisfies law's real and full demand only when, by the full payment of the penalty, he reinstates and restores the sinner or debtor, the utter untenableness of a general or indefinite atonement is made quite evident. Reinstatement is necessitated by and virtually included in all real atonement. That this result is reached only after, and it may be as we judge long after, is a consideration that detracts nothing from its true connection. Time is for us; with God lapse of time divides not, separates not, things that in his purpose, and in their own nature, are joined together. Christ's suretyship is perfect, satisfies law, satisfies God, satisfies conscience, elicits the rapturous admiration of all, because it ensures the perfect reinstatement of the sinner. So then the representation frequently made, that Christ having fully satisfied law, the sinner may, as a result of that, 1st, escape punishment, and 2nd, be restored and reinstated in the favor of God and in holiness and blessedness, is scarcely a

half-truth ; for this very reinstatement is itself part of, and an *essential part* of true suretyship, true and full satisfaction of law.

The reinstatement of the debtor, or sinner, is part of the satisfaction of law. In financial transactions the ostensible and legal reinstatement is a necessity. This reinstatement, it is true, does not in this case involve any inward change in the debtor; but we must remember that the whole transaction, in the case of suretyship for debt, is one that relates to the palpable, and visible, and legal, as man apprehends and accepts these. If then this transaction be a type, a true and natural type of the true and full satisfaction, it is because the ostensible reinstatement in the one case represents the full and perfect reinstatement in the other.

The chief objection to atonement by a substitute, or to the satisfaction of law by the innocent taking the place of the guilty, arises from a radically defective conception of that transaction. What law seeks, it confessedly seeks of the culprit. Turrettine is right when he says, "The obligation in the case of crime is upon the person." He is mistaken when he overlooks the fact that obligation unto law is in all cases and necessarily upon the person; and therefore is not and can not be satisfied when the "thing required" is furnished, leaving out of the account the question, Who is it that furnishes the thing required? and this whether the thing required be money or penalty. If obligation then is upon the person, if the law looks

unto the culprit ever demanding its due, how can any substitute satisfy law? This question from its very nature deserves to be most carefully considered. I venture to affirm that no satisfactory answer can be given which leaves out of view the great fact that proper and perfect substitution, and perfect atonement thereby, carries with it full reinstatement. Atonement satisfies law because it implies reinstatement. All who believe in the satisfaction theory of atonement virtually, if not formally, adhere to the doctrine of certain and necessary reinstatement of every one for whom atonement is made. All deniers of the satisfaction theory of atonement deny reinstatement, in fact hold to an atonement that has no necessary connection with reinstatement.

SECTION THIRD.

Satisfaction of Law.

No objection to the evangelical doctrine of atonement is more frequently urged than that it is "too much like a commercial transaction, in that it represents God as making an exact bargain in regard to the terms on which he will forgive sin. To hold, as the orthodox creeds affirm, 'that Christ did make a proper, real and full satisfaction,' that this satisfaction was demanded and exacted, is to represent God as implacable in that he yields nothing, but exacts to the last farthing all that is due; so that 'however much

gratitude we owe to Christ we owe on this behalf none to God.' "

The literature alike of infidelity and of heresy abounds with repetitions and variations of this charge. Many and varied attempts have been made to modify the doctrine of atonement with the view of rendering it less obnoxious to this popular objection. But any modification that can possibly be made with this end in view is necessarily a failure. For if the exacting of the *full penalty*, whether of the sinner or of his substitute, be proof of implacability, unquestionably the exacting of *any penalty* is, so far, proof of the same characteristic. Those adopting this line of defense do at once make to the enemy the fatal concession that to administer moral law with exactness would be derogatory to the character of the Lawgiver; and thus they cut themselves off from the true line of defense and incur, for their superserviceable apologies and want of loyalty to the plain and obvious teachings of scripture and of the historic creeds of the Church, the deserved contempt of their opponents.

Between the most orthodox creed of atonement by proper, real and full satisfaction of justice, and the frank and utter denial of atonement that offers any satisfaction to law, there is absolutely no logical standing ground. For the admission that moral, unlike natural law, is wax, the admission that the Divine Judge by whom "*actions are weighed*", by whom *persons are weighed*, may manipulate the balances so that they shall not always declare to be "wanting"

that which in reality is wanting, at once overturns the doctrine of atonement altogether, and opens the way for the unlimited exercise of "sovereign prerogative" and "dispensing power" and unlimited "relaxation of law." Accordingly all who deny the satisfaction theory of atonement are on the way to a denial of atonement altogether, for, if dispensing power may be exercised that atonement may be made, it may be exercised and atonement need not be made. This logical conclusion has been reached in the denial of the necessity for atonement except such as the governmental and moral influence theories require, i. e. atonement in which Satisfaction of Law has no place.

It is greatly to be regretted that not a few of those esteemed orthodox standard theologians have yielded to the enemy the strongest strategic position of the entire field, viz.: the position that law in its very nature cannot yield; that "*God never dispenses with his law*;"* that law in the moral is necessarily quite as exact as in the material universe; that it is for the interest of the created universe, as well as for the glory of God, that law should be exact and unyielding; that it was because of this essential, unchangeable and beneficent attribute of law that atonement was necessary, if any violators of law were to be saved from deserved condemnation; that the mercy of God consisted in providing and giving a Saviour who was able to satisfy fully the demands of law, not in accepting a substitute

*Rev. Jas. Kennedy.

whom law in its own nature, and allowed to have its full demand, would not have accepted, nor in accepting of this substitute less than the law demanded; that this Divine Saviour, provided, and having made atonement, mere, pure, exact justice required the deliverance of those united to him and represented by him; that in accepting an adequate substitute law, in its whole demand, and in its fullest scope, was satisfied, nay, since this substitute was divine, was "*magnified and made honorable.*"

Yielding this strategic position we are at the mercy of the enemy. For if law can yield at all, if the universe created and uncreated can afford to have law in its higher realms melt like wax, if God's love can in any respect be shown to violators of law at the expense of justice, if Christ having done all and having suffered all he was raised up to do and to suffer, justice, exact justice, pure and mere justice, did not *permit*, *require*, *demand*, *necessitate* the deliverance of those whom he represented and whom he came to redeem, then indeed, "*Christ died in vain*," then is the "offence of the Cross" taken away, then "the wages of sin" is *not* "death," then are we all at sea as to the necessity for Christ's intervention, then are we ready to disperse on voyages of discovery that we may find good reason for Christ's coming into the world at all, and especially for his suffering in Gethsemane and on the Cross. In fact, we have a Christ whom we have little need of, and our main business is to cast about us that we may find what to do with him. If we say, He is our ex-

ample, even while we contemplate his character, his life, his miracles, his sufferings, his death we start back dumb with amazement. He the innocent one suffering when law does not absolutely demand it; suffering that the universe may see how great an evil sin is. I protest that this *is the* "ghastly spectacle," horrid and horrible exceedingly! A good God permits the innocent to suffer that the guilty may see the evil of sin. It is this theory of atonement, so called, that is open to the full force of the objection, "the innocent cannot be allowed to suffer for the guilty;" for then the innocent *as* innocent, the innocent in the place of the innocent, and without iniquity laid upon him, is permitted to suffer, and this not because law requires it, but for the sake of "Moral Influence" and "Governmental Display."

Maintaining the strategic position, as above indicated, how grand the vantage ground. Law in its very nature and in its utmost range necessarily exact, not to be mocked; law in its highest realm, law that governs angels, quite as exact as that which governs atoms; the administrator of law incapable of dispensing with his law for the reason that it is the expression of his own will which changeth not; incapable of relaxing any penalty because no prescribed penalty exceeds, in the slightest degree, or is in any respect other than what it ought to be; incapable of dispensing with law because whatever of hope or confidence there is in the created universe, as well as the character of the

Supreme Lawgiver, is linked with the sacredness, inviolability and exactness of law.

That the strict administration of exact law would be well in a universe where there was no violation of law, will, I think, be conceded by all. Surely in such universe there would be no voice raised in behalf of the relaxing of law.

Sin occurring, is it then for the interest of the universe that law become pliant? Must law now become wax? Must penalty be uncertain? Must it be proclaimed not to be certainly inflicted, but merely to frighten?*

Transgression of law having occurred, is it now to be desired that the Supreme Lawgiver should dispense with law and with penalty altogether? Is it imaginable that any being not wholly bereft of wisdom could expect, or even desire this?

What then were best in this case, what for God's glory and for the good of the universe? Instructed by history, experience and observation, as well as by divine revelation, we know what supreme wisdom judged best.

1. In the case of fallen angels law took its own course and was in no respect interfered with.

2. In the case of some of our fallen race law takes

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*I have in my library a work on atonement by a Professor of Theology, in which it is maintained that God *is not* under absolute obligation to inflict the penalties of his law. He *is* under obligation to fulfil his promises. Can the reader imagine the basis on which this astounding distinction rests? It is as follows: The person against whom threatened penalty is denounced "has no *right* to demand the infliction of the penalty." The person to whom a promise has been made "has a right to demand its fulfillment!"

its course, the penalty being in no respect mitigated. (The opposers of the satisfaction theory of atonement, the believers in a universal atonement, hold to the doctrine of the execution of the penalty upon the finally lost.)

3. The question then is narrowed down to this alone: In the case of the redeemed of mankind was law "relaxed" or "dispensed with?" Or did it in this case receive its most glorious vindication? Did it shine forth in its awfulness, its exactness and its inviolability more brightly than in any or in all other instances? Is not redemption the supreme demonstration to the moral universe of the exactness and inviolability of law?

This is the crucial question for the theories of atonement. But one theory will stand the test. It is needless to deal in detail with the many diluted doctrines of atonement. They all group themselves together upon the same shifting sand. They all assume that redemption means that law became wax. They all assume that redemption does not set forth to the universe the absoluteness of the reign of law. They stand or fall together.

Atonement, as maintained by the orthodox themselves, has been too often complicated by rash concessions and untenable statements. Standard authors speak of a dispensing power, represent that law obtained not what it demanded when Christ our substitute took our place.

"Here the twofold solution, concerning which *jurists*

treat, should be accurately distinguished. The one, which *ipso facto* liberates the debtor or criminal because that very thing which was owed is paid, whether it was done by the debtor or by another in his name. The other, which *ipso facto* does *not* liberate, since not at all the very thing which was owed, but an equivalent, is paid, which, although it *does not thoroughly* and *ipso facto discharge the obligation*, yet having been accepted—since it might be refused—is regarded as a satisfaction."*

"As a matter of mere law, no satisfaction can find acceptance other than the literal suffering of the penalty by the criminal in person."†

"The substitution of Christ is a case which is absolutely peculiar. Such a case could never be justified as a matter of ordinary or frequent occurrence. It could only be when something extraordinary called for its introduction, when such a combination of requirements met as could but seldom come together, that it would be warrantable to admit of the innocent being substituted in room of the guilty. Its frequent occurrence could not fail to have a most injurious influence in weakening the sense of moral obligation. That the bad should be pardoned at the expense of the good, the virtuous sacrificed that the wicked might be spared, and those who are a blessing to society cut off that such as are a curse might be perpetuated, are what no wise government could tolerate.

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*Turrettine Locus XIV. Quaestio 10. †The Atonement, p. 192, Hodge.

The punishment of crime would, in this case, be so dissevered from the perpetration of crime, as to impair the motives to obedience and take away all fear of offending against the law. The purposes of good government thus require that the principle of substitution shall be but rarely introduced."*

Rather the boundless resources of law are revealed to us in that it contains in itself provision for the exercise of utmost virtue on the part of every subject of law from the least to the greatest; even as the boundless love of God, in the free height of that heaven which is above law itself, that dazzling height wherein God Himself alone acts—that of absolute sovereignty—has free and full scope in providing, "raising up," "delivering up," the Christ. The utmost virtue of all subjects of law, including the Christ himself in the capacity of a servant and under law, was required and enjoined by the law of God, while the utmost exercise of divine goodness, in the gift of Christ and salvation by him, was required solely by the Infinitude of the Divine Perfections. "*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and gave his Son*"—"*God so loved that he gave*"—This is the one channel opened for the out-flowing of infinite mercy. It is a channel wide enough for the full volume of divine mercy. If divine mercy could flow in other channels this one need not have been opened. Mercy at the expense of law, mercy by suspension of law, by relaxation of law,

*The Atonement, p. 46, Symington.

or by any interference whatever with the onward movement of law, is a pure figment of the brain, not merely unsupported by any hint either in scripture or in nature, but one against which nature as well as scripture vehemently, uniformly and even awfully protests.

If to many it seem "revolting" to represent God as dealing with sin, whether for its punishment, for its pardon, or for its removal, according to the strict requirements of law, i. e., with infinite exactness, this fact is not even a presumption of the incorrectness of such representation. The exactness of law is that which the guilty ever deprecate and dread.

Aside from all that nature and scripture teach regarding the exactness of God's dealings, it is, *a priori*, credible that God in the infinitude of his wisdom and power should be able to find a way by which he could save sinners, without departing from that exactness and accuracy which characterizes all his works in nature and providence. Why should men object to the idea of "a plan of salvation," or to the doctrine of salvation in exact accordance with a plan, when one of the first lessons of life is that whatsoever is done wisely and well must in the nature of the case be done according to a plan, when, by all confession, in nature and in providence there are sure proofs of a divine plan, never departed from, never changed or modified, for the obvious reason that the author of this plan was one who "*sees the End from the Beginning*," one who "*changeth not.*"

Divine love moved Christ to accomplish the work of our redemption by becoming obedient, by suffering in obedience to law all that law demanded. How can this transaction be regarded "mercenary"? Those who so regard it must imagine that bargain, agreement, covenant engagement and exact fulfilment of these are derogatory to character. The very reverse of this is true. Whatsoever God does, whether in nature or in grace, he does with infinite exactness.

SECTION FOURTH.

Equivalent Penalty.

Law as apprehended and administered by men in all lands and in all ages has not only admitted substitution in every case in which a really adequate substitute was offered, but it has admitted equivalent penalty. Much of the confident asseveration of skeptical and heretical writers regarding the inadmissibility of equivalent penalty is alike unscriptural, unreasonable and contrary to the judgment of mankind and to the uniform practice in the administration of justice in courts of law in all lands. This is too obvious to need much comment. The admissibility, the propriety, of equivalent penalty in the satisfaction of obligations to law is without hesitation assumed. It would be well if that class of theologians, whom Dr. Hodge was provoked to designate as "dapper," while hastening to

put themselves in sympathy with the best modern thought, would pay some attention to the commonplaces of jurisprudence sanctioned by the unanimous verdict of mankind. If they are correct in their confident arraignment of the principle of equivalent penalty as set forth in the Bible and in the creeds of the Church, it is high time they set themselves to the task of eliminating from the entire legislation of Christendom, and of heathendom as well, the astounding and universal recognition of that utterly unphilosophical, inadmissible and erroneous principle. Before this task is accomplished we shall be able to judge of the efficiency of the best modern thought in turning back the full tide of human thought which, so far as this matter is concerned, has flowed calmly on in one direction in all the centuries past.

"The commercial language, above quoted," (that representing Christ's work "as a *redemption*, as a deliverance from the curse of the law by the *payment* of an EQUIVALENT as a *ransom price*," representing Christ as "our ransom," our "SUBSTITUTED RANSOM" and Christ's followers as "the redeemed,") "is not the invention of orthodox theologians. It is the spontaneous and very frequent language of the Holy Ghost, deliberately chosen to set before our minds the true nature and method of Christian salvation. It is moreover plain that this language, taken in its obvious sense, is most appropriate to the subject, if our view of the nature of the Atonement be true, while it is

certainly unnatural and misleading if either of the alternative views should be true."*

Scripture without hesitation and without explanation represents salvation by Christ as a transaction analogous to the payment of debt, the ransom of a captive, the redemption of a forfeited inheritance. From the beginning to the end of the Bible there is no note of warning, no intimation that these comparisons may be misleading. It is always assumed that they do plainly set forth Christ's work of redemption.

The outcry against the theology that compares Christ's work to the payment of debt, to the redemption of a forfeited inheritance, the outcry against the use of any one of the abounding scriptural allusions to financial transactions, is an outcry that betrays at once disregard for scripture and a misconception of Christ's perfect work of redemption.

The principles of justice, the standard of right, the requirements of law, as these have been illustrated and exemplified in financial transactions among mankind in all lands, are identical with the principles of justice, the standard of right and the requirements of law in the highest sphere.

God having plainly taught us that Christ paid a ransom price, redeemed us by satisfying our obligation to law, there must be a beautiful analogy between the discharge of debt by a surety and Christ's work, an analogy that holds with wonderful accuracy and

*The Atonement, p. 193, Hodge.

minuteness in a vast number of particulars. Regarded in the light of this beautiful and predetermined analogy, so far from being degraded, Christ's work is held aloft in all its gloriousness. In many notable texts of scripture this is clearly, plainly, set forth. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as of silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood." This text links Christ's work with redemption by price, and Christ's work in its utmost gloriousness is directly asserted to be redemption by a ransom price, the only point of distinction being the *nature and value of the price paid.* The interpreter who considers this text as separating Christ's work from, and as of a different kind from, the redemption that is familiar among men even that by silver and gold, utterly misapprehends the text. The difference that the text brings out is a difference, not as to the nature of the transaction, but solely as to the value and excellence of the ransom price. It is a ransom price, it *is* a *payment, a redemption.* It is a *satisfaction* of a *legal* obligation; but the price, the ransom price, is the wonderful thing, not the other characteristics of the transaction. No, the other characteristics are like, and it is because they are like that the unlikeness, the dissimilarity, the vast superiority, of the price is set forth in a clear light.

Law, in its own nature, and without the exercise of sovereign prerogative, and without any dispensing power on the part of the Lawgiver, admits substitution, not only in the case of debt, or the deliverance of persons condemned by law merely as debtors, but

it provides for substitution in the case of persons condemned for crime, when the prescribed legal penalty for the crime is such that man may fully meet and satisfy the law, consistently with his already existing obligations and duties; and that this provision of law may not be unused *Equivalent Penalty* is admitted in a vast variety of ways. The admission of substitution and of Equivalent Penalty, so far from being peculiar to the scheme of salvation by Christ, so far from being introduced arbitrarily and by mere prerogative, is familiar to all men in the ordinary administration of law. In every country in Christendom by far the largest number of crimes tried in criminal courts are crimes punishable with "fine or imprisonment." In legal language persons are *condemned* in such and such a sum. Here then is *penalty* required of the guilty. Why, if law in its nature is opposed to substitution, has law, as understood and administered by man, never once closed the door against benevolent and self-sacrificing friends who might be disposed to deliver a criminal from this form of penalty? Surely no sovereign prerogative is required when the penalty of a certain offence is a fine; for law offers no objection to a substitute in this case. But both substitution and equivalent penalty are clearly recognized in every case, whether in fact a substitute offering equivalent penalty appear, or whether for want of such the friendless culprit be hurried away to prison, since the law, to the last moment, keeps open before him this door of hope.

In a certain country there were two young men who were bound to each other by the ties of kindred, but they were very diverse in character and conduct. The one was prodigal in the extreme. He not only spent all his living, but he sank into vice, and proceeded from one step to another until he was at last arrested and brought to trial for a crime, for which the penalty prescribed by law was "a thousand talents or perpetual banishment."

Soon it became known abroad that this terrible sentence was to be pronounced, and to be followed with certain execution of it without hope of any change of the sentence, or of a modification, or even a reprieve. These tidings reached the ears of his kinsman who was dwelling in a distant part of the same country. On hearing these tidings he hastened to the miserable town and into the presence of the court. He arrived after the sentence had been pronounced. The court and all the spectators, knowing that the poor culprit had no means of paying the immense fine, and knowing that not one, not all, of his miserable companions in revelry and crime were able to furnish even a small fraction of that vast sum, as well as the culprit himself, looked for nothing else than immediate and perpetual banishment. The law, indeed, and the sentence clearly showed that he had the alternative: a thousand talents would satisfy the law, for it was expressly placed side by side with banishment, as a penalty judged to be the *equivalent* of banishment.

But this satisfaction of law by an equivalent penalty he was unable to make. It therefore was no relief to him; for neither he, nor any man in the town could meet that penalty. The trial was a fair one, the condemnation was acknowledged to be a just one. The great government represented by the judge who held his court in this miserable place, was a government distinguished, both for its absolute justice and for the benignity of its laws. The culprit and his companions, when the sentence was proclaimed, and all the people of the town, failing to see any significance in the provision of the law which allowed equivalent penalty, since no one in that wretched town would be found willing, or if willing would be found able, to meet the penalty, willing and able to be a substitute for the condemned culprit; failing to see that this provision of the law, clearly announced in the sentence, did provide for the successful admission of substitution, were disposed to regard the law and the decision of the court, as though no such provision had been made. They thought of nothing but the banishment of the condemned, knowing that this form of penalty no one would be found willing to assume.

In the great assembly that looked on, the kinsman from a distant city appeared, and addressing the judge, said, "I am ready to take the place of my condemned kinsman. Lay on me the penalty, be it what it may." The judge addressing the benevolent kinsman assured him that the sentence was one which no substitute could meet. Of that vast assembly all eyes

were turned towards the distinguished stranger who had so unexpectedly appeared among them, every countenance clearly indicating the hopelessness of the proposed substitution.

The judge continuing his address to the benevolent stranger assured him that there was, indeed, for the unfortunate culprit this provision of the law that a thousand talents was by the express sentence the equivalent of banishment, but added, that no one in the town, or, indeed in the whole country, could be found able, or if able, willing, to part with so great a sum for the benefit of one so justly condemned for his crimes; and as for suffering banishment in his stead, the law would not permit any one to do that were he ever so willing to sacrifice himself.

To this the kinsman of the condemed replied by furnishing, to the astonishment of all, the full amount of the prescribed penalty, the thousand talents. The culprit was not banished. The kinsman proved to be the heir to an immense estate, and his poor friend who so narrowly escaped perpetual banishment became a joint heir with him to that vast inheritance.

1. The significance of the admission of *substitution* and of *Equivalent penalty* in the administration of law can hardly be over-rated. That there are crimes for which no ransom man can furnish will avail—crimes so great that there is no alternative but one only penalty prescribed by human law, is not to be understood as determining that there is really no equivalent pen-

alty that would fully satisfy law, but rather as the confession of man's inability to discern clearly what, in such cases, would be a just equivalent. When all men claim and exercise the right to enact and administer laws in which equivalent penalty is provided for, how can we assume that the Supreme Lawgiver is not able to administer law in its utmost range in accordance with this principle?

2. The admission of equivalent penalty opens wide and wondrous opportunity for substitution. The relations of substitution and of equivalent penalty as these are provided for in law, and as they are exemplified in law administered by man in dealing with the innumerable crimes of which we read day after day, or in law in its utmost height, deserve to be profoundly and devoutly studied.

3. Marvellously beneficent results are secured by the admission of this principle, results which, so far as we can see, could in no other way be attained, results affecting the fallen and the unfallen. Had no provision been made for equivalent penalty the benevolent kinsman would have been debarred from acting as a substitute. The culprit would have been without hope, and must have been "*forever banished.*" Law could not allow a substitute to assume a penalty that involved his own destruction, or perpetual banishment.

How wonderful is it that in common occurrences in the administration of justice every principle of law relating to the admissibility of substitution is clearly brought out. The equivalent penalty is one that is

once offered; at once completely rendered. And by usage of courts it is always the equivalent of a prolonged penalty in prison or banishment. Equivalent penalty for violation of law of a kind that it is placed over against a prolonged endurance is not peculiar to orthodox theology, but is familiar to all. Christ's furnishing by "one offering" an equivalent to what should have involved prolonged imprisonment or banishment is exactly, beautifully, frequently exemplified among men.

4. *Suffering* by the innocent in meeting the penalty of law prescribed for crime is admitted among men. The man who parts with what is his suffers in his property as certainly as man suffers in any other way. It is not merely a mistake to say that law does not permit a substitute to deliver a culprit by meeting the penalty, but it is a total mistake to imagine that law, as it has always been understood and administered among men, does not permit the proposed substitute to *suffer* in meeting penalty. All penalty involves suffering. The payment of a fine or ransom, by one every way able, involves suffering in so much property, but this is a kind of suffering that does not involve the ruin of the sufferer, and only such suffering can be allowed.

The language of mankind, if it can establish anything, establishes the principle that men are properly said to *suffer* when their property is swept away. When floods come or fire sweeps through a town or city, who hesitates to speak of "*the sufferers*"? Who

hastens to explain? "These are not sufferers, they have but lost their property." So far from this there is a peculiarly keen sense of this kind of suffering. The case supposed, if we imagine the kinsman to have given all his possessions, shows that law permits substitutes to suffer in their property. That it forbids them to suffer in prolonged imprisonment, or banishment, is owing to other considerations that must not be overlooked, and *not at all* because suffering *in its very nature* is inadmissible. *Suffering* not only is admissible, it is the main element in all penalty.

5. Substitution in its own nature involving humiliation, or a descent from a high and honorable place to a humble and lowly place, is also clearly admitted in law as commonly administered by men.

The kinsman by giving all might readily be imagined to come down to the position of a servant. His one great act of charity might involve his passing from affluence to extreme poverty, so that "he had not where to lay his head."

While self-sacrifice of this kind may be rarely, if ever, witnessed, it is undeniable that law offers no barrier thereto. Even the grossest criminal, ere he is hurried away to prison or banishment, may at any time be rescued if in his case the law has admitted equivalent penalty of such kind that man is able to assume it; and this though the ransom, instead of being a comparatively small sum taken out of his abundance, were *all that he had*, so that at once he should be reduced to extreme poverty and to the condition of a servant.

Law even as administered by man offers no barrier to benevolence. Law, the law of God, the law of God even in its denunciation of the most dreadful penalty, is not intended to be a barrier to the benevolent impulses or the benevolent action of any loyal subject of law. Law as understood and administered by men stands ever ready to admit any substitute able to meet the penalty. This fact deserves to be very seriously considered before pronouncing against the admissibility of substitution, and of equivalent penalty by a substitute, except by "sovereign prerogative," "dispensing power," and "relaxation of law."

Law as administered by men admits substitution for crime and admits equivalent penalty, allows "the innocent to *suffer* for the guilty" (for all penalty involves suffering), allows the innocent to suffer the loss of all that he has. If we ask why this particular kind of suffering is allowed, the answer is at hand: This is the kind of suffering which man is competent to assume, for 1st. It is completed at once, it is "by one *offering*." 2d. It is not *ruinous*. The sufferer survives. 3d. He is not, in the long run, a loser, but is *rewarded*. Any amount or extent of suffering by a substitute in meeting the legal obligations of another, in which these conditions meet, law in its utmost range freely admits. There is no reason to believe that there is a violator of law in the universe whose obligations unto law may not be assumed by another. If there are violators for whom there is no hope, it is because there is no hope that any *adequate substitute* offering

equivalent penalty shall ever be raised up; and not because law, the law of God, which is expressive of *all* his perfections, closes the door of hope against the fallen or forbids utmost benevolence on the part of any one of all the loyal subjects of law.

6. The admissibility of substitution and of equivalent penalty by a substitute may be more clearly seen by reflecting upon the consequences of the refusal, limitation, or restriction of these.

If, in the extreme case supposed, the kinsman may not be allowed to satisfy an obligation which he is willing and able to satisfy by parting with "all that he hath," on what principle can any legal obligation be met by a substitute? Wheresoever the limit be fixed, in each case, it is assuredly not fixed by the law. Law cannot be understood to say, "Pay the ransom for thy kinsman, thy friend, or thine enemy, if it be a very light one. Pay it not if his case be such that utter ruin would come on him if thou refuse. Pay the ransom if thou canst do so, and live in splendor as before." No, law fixes no limit, but ever permits all to be imitators of Him who, "*though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor.*"

But if law in its own nature does not stand ever ready, ever waiting for, any adequate substitute to deliver any one under sentence of condemnation, then there is a barrier thrown in the way of utmost benevolence. If law as administered by man *always* accepts any competent substitute in every case in which the penalty is one that a substitute may satisfy, even

though his meeting the penalty involve his giving all that he hath, can we think that God's law does not hold the same attitude and keep the door ever open for any adequate substitute? I am confident that the reason this characteristic of law has not been clearly seen and generally recognized, is that there has not been clear discrimination as regards the grounds on which substitution by mere man in criminal cases is limited and restricted practically and almost exclusively to a few cases of inferior kind. It has not been duly considered that the severer forms of penalty are not assumed and met by men, *not because law forbids it*, but simply because men are not competent.

7. Instead of law being relaxed or suspended, that substitution and equivalent penalty might be introduced law itself simply requires these. The law that requires the giving of a cup of cold water is the same law that requires the giving of "all that a man hath, yea, and his own life also." Substitution, or the assumption of the obligations of another, is simply the highest exemplification of virtue, so that before each the way is open, even to Christ himself.

But we are told that "the innocent may not suffer for the guilty." Those making this assertion imagine they have reached bed-rock both as regards philosophy and morals. The innocent may not be allowed to suffer for the guilty! What kind of world that would be wherein this restriction were laid upon all the virtuous, even the average imagination should be able to picture to itself. Let us rejoice that, bad as our

world is, it is not a world wherein the innocent are not allowed to suffer for the guilty.

These philosophers should reflect that the innocent alone can suffer, to any purpose, for the guilty. Innocence is the essential qualification for this the highest form of virtue. This holds good in every case. Even the substitute or surety for debt is the innocent.

But, severely analyzed, what views, what principles, underlie this clamorous outcry against the innocent suffering for the guilty? Is it not assumed that suffering for the guilty is wholly an evil and not something to be, with heroic and hopeful heart, undertaken? The objector sees not at all what every worthy substitute consenting to suffer for another must, in some degree, discern, and what the Great Sufferer ever had in view, "*joy set before him.*" The objection proceeds on the principle that bliss is gratification. That the road to utmost honor and bliss is one that leads through sorrow and suffering, the objector by no means admits. His road to bliss is gratification, let who will suffer. Other road to bliss our Lord taught us, aye, trod before us.

The innocent in this world ever suffer for the guilty. He that has not learned this has learned nothing. He that learns not this is incapable of learning anything. He who thinks the innocent may not suffer for the guilty has not learned the alphabet of virtue. He who thinks God's law must be set aside before this can be allowed, dishonors the law. All the suffering

of the innocent for the guilty that the world has yet seen, all that aggregate of suffering by those "of whom the world was not worthy," groups itself under the shadow of the cross, and all of it, together with the suffering on the cross itself, the law of God enjoined and required. There is no super-legal righteousness. There is no *super-legal charity.*

All the holy in the ages past who suffered for others simply obeyed, but did in no respect transcend the requirement of law. The work of fulfilling the law in behalf of the redeemed was itself what the law required of him who voluntarily came under law and who was able to save.

SECTION FIFTH.

"*Sovereign Prerogative*," "*Dispensing Power*," "*Relaxation of Law.*"

That any satisfaction rendered to law by a substitute must necessarily fall short of meeting the rigid and exact claims of law, 1st, for the reason that it is rendered by a substitute; 2d, because it is an equivalent and not the very thing that was owed; that the law of God in its claims was relaxed in that any substitute was admitted, is the view taught by the orthodox generally. There is no way of avoiding this conclusion so long as we hold that substitution is not provided for in the very nature of law, so that satisfaction offered by a fully adequate substitute is quite as

acceptable to law as satisfaction offered by the violator of law in his own person. If substitution be not a normal provision of law then there must be sovereign prerogative, dispensing power and relaxation of law in order to the admission of even the most perfect satisfaction possible, by even the most perfect surety, Christ Himself. "As a mere matter of law no satisfaction can find acceptance other than the literal suffering of the penalty by the criminal in person." This I know is the view accepted by even the most orthodox defenders of the "satisfaction of Christ." As all will readily perceive, on this view certain logical conclusions of utmost significance are rendered inevitable.

1. Law may, by mere prerogative, be relaxed.

2. No satisfaction offered by a substitute can possibly meet the full requirements of law.

3. Consequently, the release of those in whose behalf satisfaction has been made is not a matter of justice, but of grace.

In all instances in which substitution is admitted in law as understood and administered by men what is rendered by an adequate substitute quite as fully satisfies law as though it had been rendered by those on whom the obligation originally rested. Neither in the admission of the substitute, the acceptance of what he renders, or the release of him in whose behalf the substitute acted, is there any relaxation of law. The substitute, in every case, not only may be, but must be accepted. The same is true of the satisfaction which he offers. The release of him for whom satis-

faction has been made is then a matter of mere justice. The grace consists always and solely in the voluntary engaging of the substitute. To fulfill the engagement is to fulfill the law. To agree to assume the legal obligations of another is grace. To fulfill these obligations is justice. That the whole transaction may be one of pure and mere grace it is necessary that the fulfillment of the legal obligations be pure, mere and exact justice.

In accepting the services of an adequate substitute, in any one of the innumerable instances in which substitution is by law admitted among men, law is not at all relaxed. This fact deserves to be profoundly studied. It proves that there may be substitution without the slightest evasion of the exact and full demands of law. It proves that there is nothing in the nature of law which forbids its being fully satisfied by a substitute. This being the case, it is not to be assumed that the one great substitute, of whom all others were but types, was one who could be admitted only when law had been relaxed.

That law may be fully satisfied it is necessary that the substitute be one so fully qualified that law in its most rigid enforcement can offer no objection. There would be a relaxation of law in accepting any substitute not able to render to law all that was demanded. So that these two propositions stand or fall together. 1st. There was no relaxation of the law in admitting Christ. 2d. The full penalty of the law was borne by Christ. Turrettine, the oracle of the acccepted doc-

trine of the relaxation of law in admitting Christ, quite consistently, plainly and frequently insists that there was *leniency* shown to Christ, while many who follow him in accepting the former illogically part from him as regards the matter of leniency, contending that Christ endured in strict rigour of justice the penalty of the law. The logical conclusion of Turrettine is irresistible. There could be no relaxation of law in admitting a substitute who should render to law all it demanded. The question of relaxation of law in admitting any given substitute is, therefore, a question that hinges upon the question of the completeness of the satisfaction which the proposed substitute furnishes.

There is perhaps no question treated of by theologians in regard to which opinion is so completely unsettled. Those denying the satisfaction theory of atonement confidently affirm that Christ did not assume the obligations we were under, did not "make a proper, real and full satisfaction to God's justice." They hold that Christ's obedience and sufferings rendered it proper, and consistent with the best interests of the moral universe, for God to forgive sin. The orthodox holding to the doctrine of "relaxation of law" or "dispensing power" in admitting Christ, and consequently to the doctrine of leniency in dealing with Christ, whatever they may imagine, or affirm in words, do in reality occupy the same ground with all the opponents of satisfaction; for then Christ's work, be it what it may, was a work which simply rendered

it consistent with good government to grant pardon.

In modern times it is thought the doctrine that Christ rendered to the law "all that was owed," may be summarily, if not contemptuously dismissed. It is thought incredible that Christ could comply with the full demands of the law, incredible that God should require this. As for this being required it *is* incredible that any sufferings should have been required unless there was the most imperative necessity for them. But there could be no imperative necessity if sin could have been pardoned by mere exercise of prerogative.

When it is maintained that Christ by his obedience culminating in his sacrificial sufferings and death fully satisfied the law, men say at once, It is incredible. They denounce such assertions as rash and unwarrantable. They do not reflect that the denial of this doctrine implies the acceptance of a view of Christ's work, which *is* rash and unwarrantable indeed; viz.: that they are capable of weighing and estimating the obedience and sufferings of Christ, nay, that they have done this already, and have found them falling short of what the law required. Meantime they seem quite oblivious of the fact that the element of the infinite enters into that which they have been weighing and estimating. How Christ could fully satisfy the claims of law, endure "in strict rigor of justice the unrelaxed penalty of the law" in his person, must be to all created intelligences forevermore a mystery incomprehensible as that of creation itself. But, so far from being incredible that a *Divine Saviour* should be able

to do this, it is incredible that he should fail to do this. When we deal with the infinite it is the mysterious and the incomprehensible that is credible. The gravest objection to all the theories of atonement which deny that it was a satisfaction of law, is that they represent Christ's work as if it were not the work of an infinite Saviour, as if it could be comprehended in its length and breadth and fully estimated by man. The infinitude, the divinity of Christ, and this alone, furnishes ground for believing that he rendered perfect satisfaction to the law.

Sovereign prerogative, dispensing power, relaxation of law, would never have been imagined had it not been assumed that law in its very nature, law allowed its own course, could accept no substitute, could be satisfied with nothing but the actual enduring of the penalty by the sinner in his own person. It is thought that law was turned aside from its aim, arrested in its course. It is thought that law was constrained to accept an "equivalent" and not the "very thing owed," and this from a substitute, not from the sinner, of whom alone the law is regarded as demanding its due; whereas law moving on in its own course, law without swerving in the least from its prescribed path, found Christ in our nature, and "under law," and by his own voluntary and gracious covenant engagement our surety and substitute, answerable for all that was against us. No one is a surety, or substitute for another, but one who comes into the very place where the full weight of the obligation falls.

1. Holding to relaxation of law in admitting Christ, we are constrained to assume that law in its own nature makes no provision by which the virtuous, the able and willing may, according to their ability, assume and meet the legal obligations of the erring and helpless of their own race; an assumption which is not merely unsupported, but is contradicted, by what we learn of law whether in scripture, nature, or providence.

2. We are compelled to admit that there is necessarily an unsatisfied demand of law which, in the very nature of the case, neither the actual atonement made by Christ, nor any atonement conceivable, can ever meet; a demand of law kept at bay forevermore by mere prerogative.

3. It is self-evident that any supposed grace in the relaxation of law in admitting Christ, would detract from the riches of grace in providing and delivering up Christ. Grace in consenting to accept a substitute when law made no provision for substitution, grace in accepting satisfaction at the hand of a substitute, and in accepting of the substitute an equivalent, when law in its full demand would have accepted neither the substitute nor the equivalent, is grace which robs the great atonement of its chief glory. Such grace is buried forever out of sight in the fathomless sea of that Infinite Grace which provided a Saviour whose qualifications, whose relation to, or rather perfect identification with, his redeemed, whose relation to divine law in the utmost compass and extent of its demands,

not only rendered unnecessary, but impossible, the exercise of dispensing power, or relaxation of law in accepting him; unnecessary, superfluous, impossible, as to add to the light of noonday.

4. To hold that there must be a relaxation of law that utmost virtue may be exercised, is to dishonor the law.

5. A satisfaction by sovereign prerogative imposed upon law, might indeed have been rejected; but a satisfaction of any legal obligation which might without injustice be rejected, is a satisfaction in name rather than in reality.

6. Conscience requires a satisfaction which justice cannot but accept.

7. God can then show mercy, not merely apart from law, but setting aside, dispensing with, or relaxing law by mere prerogative.

8. If there was relaxation in admitting Christ, then the absoluteness of the reign of law is not taught to all the universe by the Great Atonement.

9. It is incredible that there should be these two ways of exercising mercy.

10. The resources of law are more gloriously revealed, Conscience more fully satisfied and at rest, vastly greater "Grounds of Gratitude" furnished, the grace of God in giving Christ and the grace of Christ in making atonement more fully displayed, when the ineffable glory of "sovereign prerogative" is lifted up to its true place far above the utmost range of law; when "dispensing power" and "relaxation of law"

disappear even as morning clouds, leaving *The Great Atonement* in its utmost perfection, grandeur and glory over-arched with the cloudless sky—the utmost manifestation of the utmost fulfilment of Unrelaxed Law.

"*Grounds of Gratitude.*"

To defend the satisfaction theory of atonement it has been thought necessary to repel the charge that it represents the work of redemption as like a commercial transaction. To this end it has been thought necessary to to establish a very marked distinction between even those very financial transactions unto which scripture so often compares it. Two points of distinction are specially insisted upon; 1st. A pecuniary obligation it is said is satisfied when the required sum is furnished, the question being, not "who pays, but what is paid." 2d. A pecuniary satisfaction, no matter by whom rendered, liberates the debtor, whereas in the case of crime the obligation is upon the person, and even when by relaxation of the law even the most perfect satisfaction that a mere substitute can render has been accepted, such satisfaction does not thoroughly discharge the obligation, does not liberate.

I have in another place shown that the obligation of the debtor can be discharged only by himself, or by some one consenting to assume the obligation, in which case he becomes the debtor. As for the distinction in regard to the liberation or reinstatement of the debtor

or sinner, to maintain that perfect satisfaction by an adequate substitute rendering an equivalent does not liberate or reinstate him in whose behalf it is rendered, is really a begging of the question. The language used by Turrettine shows clearly that the satisfaction he maintained was one that did not satisfy, and the equivalent was not equal. He has plainly revealed his real sentiment. Assuming that satisfaction by a substitute was wholly unprovided for in the nature of law, something that could not take place until, by sovereign prerogative, the law had been relaxed, not what law demanded, but what law was constrained to accept, he held that it could not discharge the obligation. In this he was assuredly logical and consistent. A satisfaction such as law, allowed its own course, law *unrelaxed*, would reject, cannot be a satisfaction which thoroughly discharges the obligation. Therefore there was a twofold exercise of sovereign prerogative: 1st. In relaxing the claims of law so as to admit any substitute, even the most perfect; 2d. In releasing those in whose behalf the substitute acted, since the substitute having done all that was possible for any substitute to do, the obligation was not thoroughly discharged, and this for two reasons: 1st. The satisfaction was rendered by a substitute; 2d. It was "an equivalent and not at all the very thing that was owed."

Neither payment of debt nor satisfaction for crime, is ever the giving of "so much for so much," in the sense that any fixed and definite quantity is ab-

solutely required for the payment or for the satisfaction. There is precisely the same latitude, the same provision for equivalents, in the one case as in the other. In all *real* satisfaction, whether for debt or for crime, there must be "so much" of value or worth, but so far from any necessity that there be "so much" in the sense that a definite and fixed measure or weight, or a "constant and definite kind and degree of suffering" are required, there is in the one case as in the other the widest range and room for the utmost variety, and yet always an exact equivalent or definite amount of real value.

Now the orthodox themselves strenuously and frequently insist that Christ rendered an equivalent, that "the dignity of his person gave value to his offering." They assuredly do not mean to admit that Christ's satisfaction was something indefinite, inexact. With utmost reverence may it be said that "so much" was required of him and "so much" was rendered by him. In how many instances and in how many ways did our Lord clearly indicate that very definite and clearly defined and unalterably fixed covenant engagement bound him to fulfill all righteousness? Everything he did, everything that he suffered, was in fulfilment of the obligation he had assumed.

The grounds of gratitude in the case of the debtor for whom a substitute has rendered satisfaction and the grounds of gratitude in the case of the sinner for whom the surety of the better testament has rendered satisfaction, are not different in nature, as is strenuously

argued. The marked difference so strenuously insisted on has no existence. There is an unanswerable vindication of the doctrine of the Reformed Churches from the puerile charges of ignorant or unscrupulous opposers of atonement. This answer has again and again been fully presented. It is that the double grounds of gratitude suggested by the ignorant or unscrupulous adversary have really no existence. All that we owe to Christ we owe to God who gave Christ.

But the theory of double grounds of gratitude is utterly without foundation. It is astonishing to find it proposed seriously. In fact it is a virtual surrender to the enemies of atonement. The only difference between this view and that of the persistent decriers of the atonement or satisfaction of Christ is a difference of degree. What Christ did made it proper for God to remit sin. All the opposers of atonement hold this. Some may judge that Christ did more and some less, but they all hold that God directly and graciously forgave sin and released the sinner, not because justice and law were fully satisfied, but because God graciously regarded as a satisfaction that which Christ offered.

If God could accept, by mere arbitrary decision of his will, an offering that did not thoroughly discharge the obligation, no reason can be given why any offering, even the least, might not, on the same grounds, have been accepted.

The infinite justice of God did not merely require that *something* be done. If it could have been satis-

fied with something, it could have been satisfied with *anything*, nay without anything; justice does nothing with a slack hand or in an inaccurate or inexact way. If justice act at all, it is as justice, and justice is not a question of more or less.

Those holding to the orthodox view of atonment will always be charged "with the folly of representing the sacrifice of Christ as a purely commercial transaction" for the simple reason that those who reject the orthodox view do always misapprehend and therefore misrepresent it. They believe that a given debt can be satisfied only by "so much," but that a given crime may be atoned for by so little; rather, they do not believe that God requires satisfaction at all. He requires that something be done, but not by any means that the full penalty be paid, nor even that an "equivalent" penalty be endured. They believe that the main ground of gratitude to God is that he remits sin, not because law has been satisfied and the full penalty endured, but that he remits sin in the exercise of sovereign prerogative, having relaxed the law. They have therefore on their view broad and stable "grounds of gratitude" to God. But shall the orthodox, when pressed by the objection that according to their view of atonement, "God was in such a sense recompensed for his favors that, however much we may owe to Christ, we owe on this behalf none to God," reply: "*We also*, according to our view of redemption, *do owe* gratitude to God, for, consider: Christ's satisfaction being satisfaction *by a substitute*,

Christ's satisfaction being '*an equivalent*' and 'not the very thing that was owed,' 'did not thoroughly discharge the obligation,' 'might have been rejected,' 'was accepted' and was '*regarded* as a satisfaction;'" and this when the all-sufficient and "unanswerable vindication of the doctrine of the Reformed Churches" stands revealed in all its extent as in the light of noonday? The "Satisfactionist" who holds to the creed that "Christ did make a proper, real and full satisfaction to God's justice," the satisfactionist who believes that our redemption was due to "the actual execution, in strict rigor of justice of the unrelaxed penalty of the law," has grounds of gratitude unto which nothing can be added, for the simple reason that all the ground that appears upon the surface of the great world of redemption is already his. The gratitude of a debtor, whose surety satisfied in his behalf a given legal obligation, is not divided unless, indeed, the surety offered a satisfaction that did not thoroughly discharge the obligation, i. e., unless the surety paid but a part of "what was owed." If the surety for debt should pay all that was owed then, assuredly, the debtor would owe gratitude to the surety and none at all to the creditor. But surely blindness in part, if not total blindness, must have happened to the orthodox theologian who even tacitly admits that this result would follow if, indeed, Christ paid all we owed to the law of God. There are in the case of the redeemed absolutely no double grounds of gratitude. All that we owe to Christ for making in our behalf perfect atonement, we

owe to God who gave Christ. He who gave us Christ gave us the atonement. The unspeakable gift of Christ funnishes ground of gratitude which excludes and renders impossible any such ground of gratitude as has been imagined. In point of fact no ground of gratitude can possibly be introduced except by detracting from the perfection of Christ's work.

There is yet a much more serious and more fundamental objection to the view maintained regarding sovereign prerogative, in dispensing with and relaxing law in accepting Christ as our substitute.

It is that it represents law as something apart from the will of God, and not only so, but as a barrier to be removed that the divine will and purpose may be accomplished, as if law existed of itself, as if law, which proceeded from God at first, were an entity, self-asserting and mighty, yet under the authority of God, so that its demands, its most imperative demands, He can set aside, causing it to be content with something less or other than was claimed.

This conflict between law and the will of God is purely imaginary. God does not govern law by his will, for law is nothing else than his will. I admit that there is a sphere quite above law wherein God acts. Nevertheless, God's supremest act of sovereignty consisted in providing, raising up and qualifying a mighty one who was to execute his sovereign pleasure in a way which, from first to last, not only fulfilled law, but magnified it and made it honorable.

It is thought to be greatly to the honor of God that

he is able, by mere prerogative, to "suspend," "dispense with," or "relax" law. It would be to his honor if law were, as some imagine, a self-existent "nature of things," or if law, instead of being the will of God, were a creature of God having a will of its own, as some theologians, unwittingly it may be, represent it. But law being the will of God, he accomplishes all that he does for the well-being of all his creatures in a way that honors law. And he has with wonderful emphasis and clearness and fullness of revelation declared to the intelligent universe that the utmost honor is put upon the law by the work of redemption. Is it then credible that the first step in the great work of redemption, by which from eternity it was determined that the law should be most gloriously fulfilled, magnified and made honorable, must necessarily be an act of sovereign prerogative, dispensing power, and relaxation of law?

SECTION SIXTH.

The Essential Conditions of True and Proper Suretyship or Substitution.

Careful study of the conditions or requirements common to all suretyship or substitution cannot fail to bring clearly into view the close analogy between the suretyship of Christ and that which has been familiar among men in the entire history of our race, as also to show that this is a normal provision of law

which has been wondrously, variously, continuously exemplified, leaving no room to doubt that God designed in this way to foreshadow the one transcendent instance and exemplification of suretyship which was determined from eternity and of which all instances of suretyship were designedly typical.

I. The Surety or Substitute must be of the *Same Nature.*

1. There has been no instance of substitution or suretyship in the whole range of human history in which this was not the case. The idea of any being lower than man being admitted as his substitute, is one that must be instantly and categorically dismissed without waiting to give any reason for such dismissal.

2. It may not be so evident at first that no being of higher order than man, can possibly be his substitute. We can patiently and even hopefully look in this direction as we cannot in the other. Yet for the same season that none beneath us can be a real surety or substitute, viz.: because not of our nature, it is quite evident none above us can be.

3. The obvious and all-sufficient reason which underlies the one already referred to is that the surety, or substitute, must become identified with those in whose behalf he acts. Oneness of nature is therefore necessary for this union. So that beings of superior nature are as effectually debarred from joining themselves to us, and identifying themselves with us, and assuming our obligations to law, as those of inferior nature. This seems quite obvious from the very na-

ture of suretyship and apart from the profoundly impressive lesson taught us by the fact that our great substitute who was made the "Surety of the better testament" behooved to assume our nature.

4. Suretyship provided for in the nature of law, yet suretyship necessarily limited and confined to persons in the same nature with us, the great question on which hinged the hope of all the millions of our bankrupt race was simply the question: Shall there be "raised up a Strong One from among the people," one in our nature to take our place and become answerable for all our obligations to the law of God?

5. God's revealed way of salvation is the glorious, complete, all-satisfying answer to this momentous question. "The word was made flesh." "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." "He took not on him the nature of angels." This first, this self-evidently essential, condition of all true suretyship was found in Christ.

II. A surety must be one who was *free from the obligations of law, not under law.*

1. The surety for debt is free, not from all the obligations of law; he is, however, in such a sense free, that he is qualified to assume a specific, limited, definite obligation in behalf of another, an obligation from which he was wholly free.

2. Evidently then a surety who would be qualified to assume *all* our obligations unto law must be one who should be free from all the obligations of law.

The condition on which a surety is allowed to assume a given obligation is that he be free from law so far as that particular obligation is concerned. If the same surety should propose to assume, one by one, more and more of our obligations, greater and yet greater, until at last he should essay to assume them all, it is obvious that in that case it would be necessary that he be exempt from all the obligations of law. Reasoning then from what we know of suretyship as familiarized to all men, we might confidently conclude that no one could be surety for us but one who is quite free from law.

3. Scripture clearly teaches that Christ being a divine person was not under the law and being possessed of perfect human nature he was qualified to be our surety, or substitute. This has all along been so clearly and fully taught by the orthodox that there is no need to do more than refer to it in this place. Christ, then, according to the clearly recognized qualification that a surety must be free from the legal obligations he proposes to assume, since he proposed to assume all our obligations, must be free from all, i. e., free from law. He was the only one possessed of this qualification which was essential for our deliverance from "Our Debts," i. e., from all that law demanded of us whether in its penalty or its precept.

III. A surety or substitute is one who is *free*, *voluntary*, *sovereign*, in assuming the obligations of another.

1. No law requires any one to assume the legal ob-

ligations of another. In this respect man's freedom or sovereignty is recognized and respected. The real obligation resting upon an individual to assume and meet a certain obligation of his distressed neighbor, may be undeniably as great as his obligation to pay to another neighbor in similar distress the sum he owes him; yet the former obligation, even were it more pressing, the law does not enforce. It is not a legal obligation. In this and like matters, God has placed man in a sphere of true sovereignty which is the shadow or image of that sphere of sovereignty, above law, in which God himself acts; and it may be added that the real character and the highest perfections whether of God or of men are displayed in their utmost range in that sphere which is, in this sense, above law.

2. The voluntariness of Christ in assuming our obligations is so held forth in scripture and in religious literature that there is no need to dwell upon it here. No law required Christ to engage to be our substitute. Nothing but pure, mere free grace.

IV. While a person proposing to be surety must be one who is free from law and must be purely voluntary in the matter of his becoming surety, he must, in the exercise of his freedom, *come under law.* Thus only can he become a surety. Our Lord freely came under law, "was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law." Christ did not merely come under law in the sense that the demands of law came upon him as upon all subjects

of law; he came under law as law rested upon us, came under the precept of law as addressed to us, and under the penalty of the law as bearing upon us. It is in this specific sense that a surety comes under law when he assumes the debt of another, i. e., he comes under certain definite demands of law. Christ came under *all* the demands of law that were upon us, even as a surety comes under one of the *least* and the lightest of law's demands.

V. Suretyship is constituted by *covenant engagement* which makes the *surety one* with those for whom he acts.

This is true of all suretyship. No intimacy of relationship, no obligations of gratitude, no degree of fitness for suretyship, makes any one a surety, makes him *legally one* with those whom he proposes to deliver from legal obligation. In short nothing constitutes suretyship and legal oneness but *Covenant Engagement.* The freedom of the surety from law is perfect, he is in no sense legally one with those he proposes to rescue until, by covenant engagement, he become united to them, identified with them.

"Suretyship is a relation" constituted by Covenant Engagement, "by which parties become Legally One and can be dealt with as such in Law, each individual of the Unit being bound in justice to suffer for the Unit, if necessary; but the suffering is not the suffering of a part, but of the whole, in law, 'Because we thus judge that if one died for all then all died.'"

The above statement of the conditions of suretyship, or substitution is taken from one of a number of letters received from distinguished theologians to to whom in months past my views regarding substitution as normal in law were submitted. It is with no little satisfaction I accept and insert here this admirable, accurate, and, I might perhaps add, exhaustive definition of substitution and suretyship. I take the liberty of commenting on the above somewhat after the fashion of Barnes' Notes. How perfectly, how accurately, the conditions of suretyship laid down, are fulfilled, in every particular, in the case of suretyship true and proper among men, as well as in the one transcendant instance of which all others were but the shadow, may be clearly seen.

1. The names of three, or three hundred, persons affixed to a legal bond or note, such relation is constistuted that they "*become legally one*" and *can be dealt with as such in law.*"

2. "*Each* individual" of the *legal* unit is "*bound in justice to suffer for the unit.*"

3. "*If necessary,*" i. e., if two of the three, or two hundred and ninety nine of the three hundred, are found unable to meet the legal obligation it then becomes necessary, and the entire obligation falls upon the individual. This is not a theological dogma. This is law as it has been understood and administered in all time. Each intelligent signer of the bond must have known this when he affixed his name to the legal note. There may have been strong probabilities

that it would never become necessary, but suretyship,, so far from leaving out of view that necessity, is a transaction which, in its very nature, keeps that possible necessity fairly and fully in view. In fact, it is the possibility of that necessity that suretyship is, by its very nature, designed to provide for.

4. "*Injustice.*" When it becomes necessary that an individual of the legal unit be made *answerable* for the obligations originally resting on the three, or the three hundred, there is *no injustice.* Again let it be remembered this is not a theological dogma to be cast aside with contempt. This is law and custom. This occurs every day and all over the world. Let it be remarked that it is not said *no hardship, no suffering*, but *no injustice.* Now unless the whole world has agreed to allow, without a word of protest, gross and manifest injustice, unless law, as administered in every nation under heaven, has been framed to sanction gross injustice in this way, then the whole world, then every government on earth, bears witness to the correctness of the definition of suretyship in this matter. This testimony, this witness, cannot be impeached or contemptuously dismissed by the smirking disciple of "the best modern thought." This is testimony which establishes beyond question that every individual of any given number of persons *may without injustice* be held answerable for the entire obligation resting upon all, and this, although his being held answerable, involve *his suffering* the loss of *all that he hath.*

5. "*But the suffering*"—suffering whether in prop-

erty or in any other way—"*is not the suffering of a part, but of the whole*," i. e., the individuals of the legal unit can say we paid, not merely the debt is paid, such an one of our number paid, we did not. No, such an one paid *therefore* we paid. Here again let it be noticed that this is not a theological dogma, but is the verdict of mankind. Paul's argument is not peculiar to the theological doctrine he is setting forth. It is the precise line of argument all accept in regard to the satisfaction of legal obligation.

6. "*In law.*" In any other sense than in law, neither the two, nor the two hundred and ninety-nine, paid. All the credit of making payment is assuredly to be given to the "*one*" who paid "for all," nevertheless "in law" it is true that "*all*" *paid.*

7. "*Because we thus judge.*" Yes, men *do* "*thus judge*" that if one *paid* "for all" then all paid. If men object to Paul's reasoning, in the text quoted, it is not because they do not judge and reason in precisely the same way and on principles identical with those so clearly announced by the inspired apostle, but because they reason and "judge" clearly and correctly in financial and legal matters of everyday life, whereas in moral and theological questions they remain, and are content to remain, in sheer ignorance or with very vague and inexact notions or sentiments.

V. While a surety must be one who was free, and who voluntarily came under law, and by covenant engagement became legally one with those in whose behalf he engages, *all that he does as surety must be*

done in mere and exact obedience to law. This holds good in the case of all suretyship from the least to the greatest actual or conceivable instance. It is true of an ordinary surety for debt as it is of the surety of the better testament. In the one case as in the other the freedom, the sovereignty, the *grace* consists in consenting and engaging; having consented and engaged, thenceforward there is nothing possible to be done in the matter other than, or in any sense beyond, mere exact fulfilment of obligation to law. The grace in consenting to become surety depends upon the certainty and the faithfulness with which all the legal obligations assumed shall be discharged by the surety.

VI. The surety in addition to the qualifications already mentioned must in every case be fully able to meet and discharge all the legal obligations he assumes *without involving ruin or permanent injury to himself, and without his failing of a full reward.*

It is because this essential condition of all proper suretyship and substitution has been too often overlooked, has not been kept steadily in view, that this transaction has been regarded by many as one that involves injustice, and therefore one than cannot be provided for and admitted in the very nature of law. No surety or substitute can properly be permitted to assume the legal obligations of others, whether these be obligations to fulfill the precept or to meet the penalty of law, except where there is the absolute assurance that the conditions just specified exist, i. e., 1. The substitute must survive. 2. He must be in the end no

loser. 3. Must be rewarded fully. And that these conditions may be realized it is necessary (*a*) that what is required of a surety, or rather what he is permitted to undertake, shall be that which is speedily accomplished or "by one offering," and (*b*) that this may be the case an equivalent is provided for and is accepted, and fully satisfies the obligation. If it be an *equivalent* it could not fail to satisfy. So that an equivalent is not merely "*regarded as* a satisfaction," as Turrettine affirms; it *is* a satisfaction.

2. Every one of the conditions above adduced may be found meeting in an ordinary case of suretyship among men, as well as in the great example of which these are but types. A surety for debt survives, is not in the long run a loser, provided he were justifiable in becoming surety. His reward is assured beyond doubt by the Righteous Judge of all the earth. The obligation he assumes he is able to meet at once, "by one offering," then what he offers is an equivalent, i. e., money which stands for any and every kind of real wealth which ministers to man's comfort and well-being. There is no finer illustration of the admissibility of equivalents in meeting legal obligations than the use of money representing value. Any debt is fully paid when an equivalent is rendered for the value received. The law and not the debtor determines what is a true equivalent. But the law always provides that the debtor may satisfy the obligation by rendering any equivalent which the creditor consents to accept.

VII. A true surety is always a true and proper substitute, and having rendered to the law "the very thing that was owed," or that which the law itself provides for—an equivalent—the reinstatement of all those in whose behalf satisfaction has been made, is a necessity, is a matter of mere justice and not of grace. Any offering rendered by a proposed substitute which does not necessitate reinstatement as a matter of simple justice, cannot be called a satisfaction. In fact the end contemplated by substitution is the reinstatement of him who is under condemnation of law, whether as a debtor or as a sinner. To this end the substitute voluntarily assumes, and has legally imputed to him, the entire obligation, so that having fully discharged it, the release, or legal righteousness, may be imputed to the debtor or sinner in whose behalf he acted. No substitution, no suretyship, is admissible either for debt, or for crime, except such as ensures the perfect reinstatement of all in whose behalf it is undertaken. The surety is not one who acquires rights and immunities which he can distribute as he pleases and to whom he pleases; since by the very nature of suretyship it is for certain definitely named parties, with whom the surety has become identified by assuming, with them, a common obligation. Neither the "Surety of the better testament" nor any benevolent surety among men ever met legal obligations for an undefined or indefinite number of persons. Suretyship or substitution of this kind is purely imaginary. It is neither taught in scripture nor admitted or exempli-

fied among men. Such suretyship is manifestly inadmissible for the reason that it ensures nothing. That good results should in some other way be ensured does not save from condemnation a transaction which in its very nature is a *mere venture*, and which, considered in itself, is at least as likely to be a failure as a success. Such transactions are not allowed, either by law or custom, among men. No substitution is admitted that does not of itself reinstate those in whose behalf it is undertaken.

VIII. Perfect suretyship does not only reinstate, it *delivers from law and places "under grace"* those in whose behalf satisfaction has been rendered.

1. So far as a given debt is concerned when satisfaction has been rendered for said debt by a surety rendering any equivalent which the law allows—and all law provides for a number of equivalents, all law provides also for the rendering of any equivalent which the creditor consents to accept—the debtor is instantly delivered from law and comes instantly *under grace.* Nor is it possible for him again to come under law, so far as that debt or obligation is concerned. Nor is it possible for him to cease to be under grace to him who became his surety, for the manifest reason that the new obligation is one of gratitude which, strictly speaking, is one that in its own nature is lasting, enduring, inextinguishable. "*Ye are not under law, but under grace.*" Delivered from law by a surety, the person delivered is not, as many imagine, remanded to the law as before. He who satisfies one legal obliga-

tion in behalf of another delivers him at once and forever from law, so far as that one obligation is concerned, and places him at once and forever under grace, so far as that one matter is concerned. Our Lord by his assuming the place of his redeemed, and taking upon him and becoming answerable for *all* their obligations, delivers them from law, so that in the fullest sense of the terms they "*are not under law, but under grace.*" But it must be remembered that deliverance from law in this way, so far from being deliverance from obligation, involves their coming under even *greater* obligations. The obligations of grace are weightier, are instinctively felt to be weightier and more sacred and more urgent than legal obligations. This is keenly felt by every one whose moral perceptions and sensibilities have not been sadly impaired. In the case of those redeemed by Christ the obligations they are under are obligations of pure grace, but these like a very flood rise and "prevail" and cover many fathoms deep the highest mountain of merely legal obligation. The obligations of the redeemed who are "*under grace*" are obligations which, in their very nature, are not only enduring and inextinguishable, but the weight and sacredness of these obligations must be more and more appreciated as "the benefits of redemption" are revealed and enjoyed in the eternal ages.

IX. Perfect suretyship carries with it not merely reinstatement, but *confirmation.*

1. It is true, a debtor reinstated before the law by

the full payment of a single legal obligation he was under, may fall under another condemnation. But let it be considered that the condemnation from which a surety delivered him can never come upon him. So far as that particular condemnation of law is concerned he is not only reinstated, but confirmed, i. e., he is righteous before the law and can never be condemned in that matter.

2. But suppose the surety had assumed and met all his obligations to law, nay, had become legally answerable for all that he owed, or could possibly ever owe to the law, is it not manifest that this would ensure not merely his reinstatement, but his confirmation? The difference between assuming part of our obligations and assuming all our obligations is the difference between condemnation and justification. A surety who should pay but part of what was owed would leave him in whose behalf he acted under precisely the same condemnation as before. So a surety who should assume and meet only part of our obligations w ould leave us under the same condemnation.

3. Reasoning from the nature of suretyship and the necessary results of suretyship, as these are recognized among men, it is clear that suretyship extending to all that we, in any way, owe, or can owe, to the law of God would necessitate, not merely reinstatement, but confirmation, since these results actually follow all true and proper suretyship among men; i. e., there is not only reinstatement, but confirmation, so far as the special and limited obligation is concerned.

The objeetions ordinarily urged against the admissibility of substitution or suretyship as fully satisfying law, when carefully analyzed, always prove to be mere objections to an inadequate substitute. A perfect substitute, one possessed of all the qualifications necessary to render satisfaction to law, *law unrelaxed always accepts.*

Law in its very nature provides for, admits and is fully satisfied with an adequate substitute. Accordingly there was no need for, no room for, an act of "dispensing power" in order to the admission of Christ as our substitute.

1. Substitution is admitted in law as understood and administered by man, in all cases in which an adequate substitute freely offers his services, not merely in the payment of debt, but in *satisfaction* for crime, provided the penalty be such that the substitute offering himself is fully competent to meet it.

2. The vast interval between such substitution as mere man may furnish, and that of Christ, is to be accounted for, not on the ground that law in its nature is opposed to substitution, but simply on the ground that adequate substitutes cannot be found.

3. This provision in the very nature of the law opens the way for the noblest exercise of virtue or benevolence on the part of creatures, and not only so, but for the exercise of the utmost love of God in providing for redemption by Christ.

4. To attribute to God an arbitrary exercise of sovereign dispensing power in setting aside the claims

of law is to make the fatal admission that mercy may be shown without atonement.

5. Divine mercy consisted in providing, raising up and freely giving Christ, and in Christ's freely offering himself. But Christ having been raised up, having been delivered up, having voluntarily come under law, then mere justice required of him the payment of the full penalty.

6. Atonement by Christ is therefore the highest instance and exemplification of that which is provided for in the very nature of law, and that which is familiar to all men. It is not unique, incomprehensible, or inimitable, but differs from substitution, as familiarized in thousands of ways to all men, in *degree* and not *in kind*.

7. All benevolent helpful work by one for another has in it the element of substitution. A cup of cold water given to a wounded soldier is given by one who is a true and proper substitute, so far as that one matter is concerned. It is not only something done for him or for his benefit, but is done in his stead.

8. Human redemption results from the coming under law of one able to do for us all we needed to have done for us, able to bear all our burdens, and to bear them in a way perfectly analogous to that in which mere men bear one another's burdens. Christ redeemed us, not by obeying a unique and special commandment, but by coming under a law that is universal.

CHAPTER IV

SUBSTITUTION OBEDIENCE TO LAW

"Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." So fulfill the law which Christ enjoins upon all his disciples? Yes, and so fulfill the law which Christ himself most gloriously fulfilled; for surely this is a law which is binding upon all subjects of law, including the highest and mightiest, even Christ himself. This obligation cannot be assumed to be restricted to any class or order. It extends unto and rests upon all who are under the law of God.

If this law be binding upon all the question arises, What is the extent of this requirement? What limit is there to the required burden-bearing in behalf of others? Are there any burdens which the benevolent may not bear, any distress that a brother able to relieve, is by the law of God forbidden to relieve? Does the law of God set a limit to the extent to which one may help another either by doing or suffering in his behalf or in his stead?

To maintain that substitution, such as that of Christ, in which all the burdens we were under were borne in our behalf, in which all the evils we were under were

quite removed, is something unprovided for in the very nature of law, something not permitted by the law, but by the arbitrary decision of the will of the Lawgiver, a decision which overrules and sets aside the claims of law, is in reality to maintain that the law of God does not provide for, but forbids the utmost manifestation of virtue.

Is such view of the law of God tenable? Rather is it not true that God's law not only provides for and admits, but enjoins and requires the utmost helpfulness, the utmost virtue? What Christ does for those whom he redeems and saves differs not in its nature, but only in extent, from that which is required of all in befriending and helping those who are in trouble and in need. It detracts nothing from the glory of Christ, nor from the perfection of his work to regard Him as the highest subject of law, and his work as the highest fulfillment of law. Christ and his work are separated from all servants of God who are mere creatures, and from all their works, by an infinite superiority without conceiving of Christ as exceeding in the slightest degree the real requirements of the law he came under, or his work as in its nature separated at all from virtue, grace, charity, in the least and lowliest of those made in the image of God. Scripture in many places calls us to contemplate Christ's work *for* us as exceeding, indeed, immeasurably, that which one man may do or can do for another. "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die; but God com-

mendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Yet this and like texts represent Christ's work, not as in its nature differing from that which may be done by man, but only in its extent. This text marks the utmost limit to which mere human love, virtue and self-sacrifice can reach, and shows how wonderfully Christ's work transcends this limit.

Substitution is simply one taking the place of another to do or to suffer in his stead. In fact whatsoever is done for another in the way of charity is done in his place and as his substitute. Substitution true and proper enters into the ordinary acts of brotherly kindness between friends and neighbors. He who gathers in the ripened harvest for his neighbor who has been prostrated with sickness, gathers in the harvest in his stead and as his substitute. By substitution is meant nothing more than the taking upon one's self the burden, the labor, the penalty, or the obligations of another. To say that the law of God forbids or does not of itself allow, substitution to the fullest extext of the ability of each subject of law, is to say that law forbids the able and willing to help the needy in their need; to say that law sets a limit to substitusion, is to say that it forbids the utmost helpfulness.

So far from restraining the able from doing all in their power for the benefit of their fellow-men in their need, the law of God requires this. But all that is done, all that can be none in this way, involves substitution. This is beautifully and forcibly expressed in

the oldest book that has come down to us. Job sums up his life of benevolence and charity, and sets forth at the same time the true nature of all charitable deeds, when he says: "*I was eyes to the blind, feet was I to the lame.*" Under severe analysis every truly charitable work reveals the element of substitution. The mistake of those who have insisted that Christ's work was not like works of benevolence, charity or self-sacrifice, such as are common among men, is that they failed to recognize the truly vicarious element in the commonest acts of charity, as well as in the one great act of charity of which all others are but the shadow. The generalizing which robs Christ's great atonement of its truly vicarious or substitutionary character cannot be too strongly condemned. The true answer to such representations is that the truly vicarious enters as an element into all charitable works. To deny the truly vicarious in the work of Christ on the ground that his work is like those works which man may do, is to misapprehend both the work of Christ and that of mere men, for in both there is the truly vicarious.

The obligation to bear one another's burdens can be restricted or limited; it must extend to all who are under law. That Christ, having voluntarily come under law, was not under this obligation must not be assumed. To assume this is to discredit alike the law and Christ's obedience to law. The grace of Christ did not consist in his doing what the law he came under did not require of him, but *in his coming under law, which in its own nature did require* of him all that

he did in our behalf. Nor must it be thought that the voluntariness, or graciousness of Christ's work is at all discredited by the fact that it was mere obedience to law. There is, there can be, no virtue in any subject of law transcending the mere requirements of law. For the law is the expression of the perfections of God himself. The law had no claim upon the Son; there was no obligation upon him to come under its commandment. His doing this was pure, mere, free grace. To this he was moved by nothing but his divine compassion. But found under law, under that law which with its precept and its penalty was against us, he, as the result of his own act of grace in joining himself to us, and by virtue of his being every way fully qualified to rescue us from ruin, was under imperative obligation. The law then directly demanded of him, since he was found under the very law which was upon us, all that we owed, whether payment of penalty or obedience to the precept.

That the work of Christ in behalf of the redeemed was peformed in obedience to the commandment of God none deny. That it was mere obedience to the same law which binds all moral beings, and that all the glorious results secured by Christ's obedience are due to the infinite power and resources of Him who rendered the obedience, and not to a unique and special law or commandment addressed to Him alone, is not so generally accepted. I have been led to very decided conviction that this is the true view of Christ's work, and also that any view short of this, however it

may seem to glorify the grace of God and of Christ, and to set aloft the whole work of redemption as above law, does in reality cast dishonor upon the law of God. Redemption, devised and arranged in pure and mere sovereignty, with its measureless grace as the utmost manifestation of the perfections of God, required no new, no unique, no special law under which it should be "wrought out;" for not only was law from the same divine mind which devised redemption, but redemption itself was contemplated from eternity and provided for in the very nature of law, so that nothing was necessary but that God should should send his own Son to accomplish, by mere obedience to law, what none but a divine servant of God could accomplish. "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." This text teaches most emphatically the adequacy of the law when obeyed by "God's own son."

Christ freely came under law which required him to do for those given him of the Father all that he has done; so that his voluntarily coming under law was his voluntarily consenting to be our substitute. The voluntariness of Christ must not be regarded as in any sense inconsistent with the absolute requirement of law. The voluntariness in which the work of Christ originated is voluntariness which, in the very nature of the case, pervades every part of his obedience, even his "obedience unto death." Substitution

provided for in the very nature of law, substitution admitted in law always and in every case in which an every way adequate substitute is offered, that which is rendered by a substitute, whether it be the "very thing that was owed," or an equivalent, fully satisfies law.

Law does not require substitution. It does not require of him who is free from its obligations that he come under its power. There is no law requiring even of him who is most fully qualified, that he come under law or under any one of the obligations of law so as to be a substitute for another. But having come under law, being found under law, then he being qualified to deliver the perishing the law requires this of him. I know that in the case of Christ all was determined in one free act of choice. There must not be imagined a double choice, 1st, In consenting to come under law; 2d, In freely consenting to be our substitute. The first act contained all; for the law which Christ consented to come under was one that required of Him his substitutionary offering of himself.

The law avails itself instantly of the glorious perfections, qualifications and resources of the Mighty one, the Almighty one, who comes under it. The law itself commands Him and requires of him that he who is fully able should obey it by rendering all that it demanded, and this by one offering. If the law require more of Him than of any other, it is solely because he hath more to give.

This view is finely presented by Bunyan, in that

passage in which Great-heart explains to "Christiana, Mercy and the rest of them" how they obtain the gift of righteousness by Jesus Christ.

"He has therefore another righteousness, which standeth in performance, or obedience to a revealed will: and that is what he puts upon sinners, and that by which their sins are covered. Wherefore he saith, 'As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.'

Here then is a righteousness . . . that he for himself wanteth not, and therefore giveth it away. Hence it is called "the gift of righteousness." This righteousness, since Christ Jesus the Lord has made himself under the law, must be given away; for the law doth not only bind him that is under it, to do justly, but to use charity. Wherefore he must, or ought by the law, if he hath two coats, to give one to him that has none. Now, our Lord indeed hath two coats, one for himself, and one to spare: wherefore he freely bestows one upon those that have none. And thus, Christiana and Mercy, and the rest of you that are here, doth your pardon come by deed, or by the work of another man. Your Lord Christ is he that worked, and hath given away what he wrought for, to the next poor beggar he meets."

"*No law required this*?" If it be meant tnat no law required the raising up of a strong one, mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost, if this be all that is meant, then I give to this assertion the fullest assent.

The law of God as it came forth from God, His whole will, the fullest expression of his moral perfections in the form of law, of commandment unto *all* subjects of law *did require* substitution and deliverance from all evil by means of substitution, so that whosoever was competent to be a substitute and thereby furnish deliverance to his brethren was under obligation of law to bear the burden of the needy. Then a strong one appearing and actually raised up, and this irrespective of the manner in which he was raised up, and solely on the ground of his actually coming under law—being found under law—he *was* under an infinite obligation to help and to save even by doing for the perishing all that he was able to do, that is, all they needed to have done for them. This obligation of law Christ perpetually and in all things recognized, under this all-including obligation his whole work was undertaken and accomplished. He *simply obeyed law.* For Him, the divine Son of God in our nature, to obey law was indeed a grand and glorious, and transcendant and infinitely momentous work. *His* obedience to law, simple and mere obedience though it were, rose heaven high in its gloriousness above any and all other instances of obedience; in its gloriousness and in its results in every direction, towards the guilty and fallen, towards God and law and justice; and all this gloriousness of the obedience, and of its results, is due to the character of Him who obeyed. He became obedient unto death. Who shall dare to say that he transcended obedience? This would be to add unto the mani-

festly exhaustive and the designedly exhaustive declaration of this notable oracle of the word: "*He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*" To admit the thought of somewhat beyond mere obedience to law, even with the best of intentions and with the idea of honoring our Lord, is to detract from the excellence of law, i. e., of God from whom law proceeds. Super-legal goodness not even Christ himself could enact, for the infinitude of God's goodness God's law itself contains. Glorious and ample scope for utmost liberty and utmost love and benevolence is found in the expanse of the heaven of law as it over-arches all subjects of law, and as it is high enough and wide enough to over-arch the grandest subject of law, the one servant of God who was able to fulfill law both in its precept and in its penalty to the uttermost, or rather who in himself and by his own transcendant act of obedience fulfilled the law in its utmost requirement.

To hold that Christ, having been found under law, was not under obligation to do just what he did, though this were held with the sole view of magnifying Christ's grace, is nevertheless to hold a view that darkens and over-clouds the whole work of Christ. There is sovereignty, there is free, mere and pure grace, above law, and from God and from Christ; but sovereignty is glorious in its own sphere. That sphere is not under law, but above law. Sovereignty and free grace consisted solely in providing Christ the substitute. To imagine that Christ should have come

under law, and then should be free to obey or disobey law, to obey so far and no farther, to imagine that sovereignty prevails at all in this matter of obedience, is to introduce only confusion. "Ought not Christ to have suffered." It became him "to fulfill all righteousness." The obligation was upon him. In undertaking this obligation in eternity he was free. He acted from the glorious height of absolute sovereignty and from pure love and mercy. Having *engaged* to obey—to obey voluntarily—this one engagement in all its infinitude of binding obligation rested upon him. This obligation he ever kept in view. His whole work is misinterpreted, misapprehended, its gloriousness veiled, unless the clear light of this infinite obligation is allowed to shine with noonday glory ever upon it. "I must be about my father's business"—"It is finished." The boy twelve years old in the temple, the Christ dying on the *cross*, and all the intervening scene, none can interpret, but in the bright light of one all-embracing obligation ever kept in view. The will of Christ wrought freely under the will of God. Nothing did Christ but according to the will, law, command of God, in mere, pure obedience unto law.

Christ was indeed the only servant of God who was adequate to the great task of redeeming the lost. The law of God manifestly, and as interpreted even by those least instructed, binds all to be helpers of others in their need, helpers to the extent of their ability.

But for Christ, the law of God, in its utmost re-

quirements, had been forevermore unobeyed; the extent of the commandment had never been fully known. But for Christ, virtue, goodness, excellence, consisting in obedience to law, had never been shown forth in perfection.

The pyramid of virtue had never been completed, for the reason that no servant of God, not all the servants of God, could have revealed the hidden resources of law, since they could never have done, even for one sinner, all that he needed to have done for him. This achievement only the Son of God, in the capacity of a Servant, and under law, could accomplish. Well may heaven and earth be called to shout together at the accomplishment of this glorious work, for it is, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men."

CHAPTER V.

INTERVENTION.

A Man shall be as the Shadow of a Great Rock in a weary land.—ISAIAH.

The hope of deliverance for those exposed to evil or danger from the power of law, whether natural or moral, is not that law shall be suspended, relaxed or turned aside from its aim, or its penalties, in any way, mitigated or modified, but that there shall be, in some way, *intervention* of adequate power operating in a way to meet the force of law. This truth, regarding the way of deliverance from danger or evil, is itself a law universal and absolute, and one that is illustrated and confirmed by instances and examples innumerable and varied, in the whole range of human history. The inviolability of law is taught in a way that leaves no room for doubt or misapprehension, taught in scripture, in nature, in human experience, taught always and everywhere.

The deepest and most radical objection, and one which is ever brought against the accepted theory of redemption, is that it represents law as relaxing its claims. It is charged that there is a relaxation of

law necessarily implied in the admission of the innocent to take the place of the guilty and become answerable to the law for them. Unfortunately Christian teachers have given much occasion for this charge, in that they have taught that there *was* a relaxation of law's rigid and exact claims in admitting Christ as the substitute and surety of the redeemed; whereas the glory of the redemption wrought by Christ is that it, in no respect, interferes with the reign of law in its utmost exactness. Redemption by atonement is the one grand demonstration to the universe that law cannot yield. This truth which underlies all philosophy, this truth which cannot be called in question without destroying the very foundations, is just the truth which is lifted up into glorious and awful prominence by the work of redemption. If law cannot be relaxed, if law must move on in its own exact and absolute reign, is there no possibility of escape for the violator of law, or for those who are in any way, or for any reason, found exposed to danger and evil from the onward movement of law? Nature and Scripture alike forbid the hope of escape by means of the suspension of law, or any relaxation or mitigation of its penalties. Nature everywhere suggests, and Scripture everywhere plainly and abundantly reveals, the one only door of hope. It is the intervention of power or means adequate to deal with law, meet its force and thus protect and deliver those exposed to evil. From the cradle to the grave the individual, from the dawn of human history to the present time the race, have

been familiarized with the one only source of danger and with the one only way of deliverance: *The one only source of danger*—VIOLATED LAW; *The one only way of deliverance*—THE SATISFACTION OF LAW.

The following propositions regarding intervention as the one only way of deliverance from the penalty of violated law, if not self-evident, will perhaps be accepted without hesitation by all who will consent to consider them candidly :

I. All danger or evil to which moral beings are or can be exposed in this world, or in any other, arises from the onward movement of forces that are obeying law.

II. The history of mankind furnishes no instance of escape or deliverance from such danger or evil, either by suspension of law, relaxation of law, or mitigation of its penalty.

III. The one only way of deliverance is by intervention of power adequate to deal with law, meeting its full force

IV. The kind of intervention necessary in each case, is determined by the kind and extent of the danger, the nature and character of the forces threatening.

V. The Great Atonement is in exact accordance with the one only way of deliverance from the power of violated law, as taught throughout the entire kingdoms of Nature and Providence, viz.: Intervention of power, adequate to deal with law and deliver the exposed.

VI. Intervention is the act of powers or persons themselves under law, and is performed under and in accordance with law. It is not and cannot be the direct and mere act of the Lawgiver. This is taught in Nature and in Providence, but especially in Redemption, in that God himself, when he would rescue those exposed to evil, sent his own Son, "made under the law."

The correctness of these propositions may be illustrated by any instance of danger or evil, actual or conceivable. From the countless multitude and endless variety of actual instances a few may serve for illustration:

Stones and rubbish from a lofty scaffolding are seen to commence their fall to the ground. A group of children are beneath. Strong, brave men are the onlookers. They have not learned the new theology. They are not "in sympathy with the best modern thought." They witness the operation of that universal law which is in wondrous ways most beneficent. It makes of myriads of worlds a universe. It binds unto each of these worlds, and holds in their places, beings and things in utmost harmony. It is a law that must not be suspended, must not be reversed, must not be unreliable. The stones and rubbish must fall, whether there be beneath innocent children or incarnate fiends; for law is no respecter of persons. Law strikes the innocent, so called, quite as promptly as the guilty, if they be found in its way. Rather law counts no one innocent who is found exposed to its

penalties. Law listens to no excuses, waits for no explanation. We should have chaos, not cosmos, if it did. The ringlets on the loveliest brow may be drenched with blood, the sparkling light in bright eyes may be quenched, but law cannot be mocked. But the strong men, the brave men, who look on—do they say: "This group of children seem, indeed, to be in danger, but they are innocent, or if not wholly innocent, is not God merciful? His law will be suspended or relaxed. These falling stones will descend lightly, or will in some way be turned aside so that the threatened evil will not come?" By no means; for they are sane men. They know that there is no hope of the suspension of law. They know that God is merciful and also that he commands *them* to be merciful, even as their "Father in heaven is merciful," merciful in rescuing the perishing in a way that interferes not with the reign of law. To rescue the exposed and helpless in obedience to a law that is to the moral universe quite as necessary as the law of gravitation to the material, they place a shield over the defenceless heads, regardless of wounds and bruises to themselves. When this takes place no law is violated. Rather the scope and resources of law are unfolded. Law triumphs over law and honors the law over which it triumphs.

"God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb?" By direct interference with the fierce law that governs the wintry storm? God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb? Sentiment, mere sentiment unsupported by a solitary shred of evidence. I beg pardon of these

sweet souls whose philosophy of redemption, whose system of theology, whose creed, beginning and end of it, is simply this: "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." I ask, What god? Assuredly not the God who rules this world. Let there be "a scientific test," a test by the thermometer. On the bleak hill-top let the shorn lamb stand side by side with the unshorn. Ah! your poetic fancy is driven as chaff before the wind. Proclaim it in this world, proclaim it in all worlds. God does not temper the wind to the shorn lamb. That is Satan's theology, the same he taught in Eden: "Ye shall not surely die." It is not in accordance with scripture, with man's experience or observation; it is not simply nonsense, it is a deceptive and ruinous error. The shepherd who should accept this as his creed could not be called "the good shepherd." The good shepherd is not, must not be, a fool. His creed must not be made of poetic fancies, but of substantial and even awful realities. God has indeed provided a way for the protection of shorn lambs, but it is one that includes the utmost care and pains on the part of the good shepherd, in gathering them into the warm and secure fold; a way that in no sense interferes with the onward movement of the most terrific storm, according to its own law. Relief, deliverance, protection, come by intervention alone, by intervention of power or means adapted to the necessities of the case. This is God's way. In this way law is honored, in that it has full and free scope, honored in that its force is met; in this way also law is honored in that

its higher resources are displayed. The brave shepherd who carries the stricken lamb in his bosom is acting under a higher law than that which guides the storm in its appointed course. He battles with, and, so far as the shorn lamb is concerned, vanquishes the storm, rescues its victim, wards off its fierce blasts.

Shorn lambs that wait for tempered winds, together with the "foolish" and "idle shepherds" who neglect to gather them into the "secure enclosed fold," cannot but perish together; for no provision has been made for the tempering of winds, or for the suspension of any of those beneficent laws which govern either the moral or the material universe; no provision has been made for the deliverance of those exposed to the forces of law, except by means of powers operating themselves under law. Intervention may indeed be by spiritual or material powers or by a pre-determination of natural forces; for God is free to protect by such agencies as he chooses.

Every different kind of danger manifestly requires a different kind of defense. From the tempest we need "a covert;" from the burning rays of the sun we need "the shadow of a great rock." To defend us from the serpent's deadly stroke we need one who is able to "bruise the serpent's head." Such an one God has raised up. One able to deal with the entire aggregate of dangers and evils that threaten our sinful race.

This exact, and clearly ascertainable, universal law or rule of deliverance from danger and evil of all kinds,

is one that makes short work of all false theories of atonement. Every theory of atonement save that which regards Christ as our substitute, meeting the full demands of law, enduring its penalty, making a "proper, real and full satisfaction to God's justice," is ruled out at once as fatally, foolishly defective, delusive, deceptive.

How admirably, powerfully yet silently the immense wheel of the great Corliss engine revolved day after day in the Centennial building! In one of our great factories where a similar wheel was kept revolving day and night, a few weeks ago a lad passing near it, by a single misstep, fell against it, was instantly hurled sheer across the immense building and was taken up moaning, mangled, bleeding, dying. It was, it is true, but a single misstep. It was but one transgression. Was it any the less severely punished? The universe is filled with just such wheels. It was the presence of such a wheel that made Paradise a place of infinite danger to our first parents. It was a single misstep that brought them, and with them the whole race of mankind, in contact with that mighty, that resistless wheel, which hurled them sheer against the dead wall where the good physician finds them all mangled, moaning and dying. It is not too much to say that every moral being in the universe has ever such a wheel right by his side. A single misstep brought the angels in contact with it and they were hurled beyond the reach of hope into the abyss of eternal darkness. In heaven itself these awful wheels

revolve eternally. Angels and redeemed men are indeed secure in bliss, but their security consists not in the absence of exact law, but in their relation to Christ. The impossibility of sin in their case, the impossibility of another misstep which should bring them in contact with inexorable law, arises not from any impassable barrier between them and the danger. Christ upholds them; Christ ensures that they shall "never fall."

The poor lad caught in the great wheel might indeed be spared and saved and healed, but not by any discrimination or tenderness on the part of the onmoving wheel. Tender hands might have caught him ere he was dashed against the deadly wall, or a physician of limitless skill and resources might have healed and restored the mangled body. But in either case law should have had its own free course. In either case pure and mere intervention alone could save. So is it ever.

Why will men continue to hope for deliverance and relief and escape in the way that God has forever closed, while rejecting the one only way open, and ever kept open, both in nature and in grace?

Can there be law and no danger? The innocent, so called, the innocent—innocent in the fullest sense of that term, so far at least as we are able to judge—are not absolutely free from danger arising from the operation of invariable law, law that does not and cannot respect persons. The innocents, if found in the place where law is hurling its hail, are in danger,

danger that is real, danger that no charm or spell can avert. As for moral beings purely innocent, they cannot be found in such place, for moral beings purely innocent must be presumed to be not destitute of wisdom. And for what end is wisdom granted them if not that they may exercise it continually in keeping themselves in harmony with the laws and forces around them? A world where law prevails is a world in which heedful regard to law is a necessity. The inhabitants of such world are safe, not apart from, but on account of, their capacity to keep themselves in perfect harmony with law, moral and natural. In fact nothing short of this is holiness. All law is sacred, as all law is from God. Heavenly beings are not merely bound to obey what we call moral law; they are bound to be in harmony with law of all kinds wherewith they are encompassed on every side. Besides it should be remembered that the distinction we make is one that does not really divide law into two separate and independent realms. Law, moral and natural, having its source in the will of God, is really one. The moral being who disregards natural law is not the innocent. Assuredly the supposed "innocents" who trespass upon natural law are not in this world leniently dealt with. How was it with the innocent man who a few days ago took hold of the knobs of a generator of electric light. "Three men stepped into the electric light works in the city of Syracuse. One of them was observed to stoop over and reach out his hands toward a thirty-light dynamo machine. Instantly he was

drawn close to the generator without a noise and without uttering a sound. He had unwittingly grasped the positive and negative rods, and was dead." If in heaven innocents of that type could be imagined to be wandering, who could assure us that even there there should never an accident be chronicled? If in the blessed world there be innocents who know not how to respect and conform to natural law as well as moral, let us not assume that in that good world where there must be myriads of holy ones who are not in this sense innocents, i. e., who do know how to conform to natural law, some fit guardians should not have charge of them. Natural law will not be mocked by saint a whit more readily than by sinner. Just because it cannot be mocked is it law at all. The "innocent" taking hold of the brass knobs might indeed think it had been well if law could have been a respecter of persons. So also he of Babylon, when "his knees smote together" while the handwriting on the wall was interpreted to him—"Thou art weighed in the balances,"—might indeed think it had been well if these awfully exact balances had been, for this once, manipulated in his favor. But it is time that all, whether innocents who are in danger of taking hold of brass knobs in any way that brings natural law upon them, or mighty monarchs who forget that they also are under law to one who is Monarch over all monarchs, should learn that law in the universe cannot be suspended for their sake. The universe of beings created and Uncreated is interested in the reign of

law undisturbed. Dismay and pale horror, blank despair, would prevail were it in one instance demonstrated that law either moral or natural was unreliable, or could be violated with impunity.

How there can be absolute and exact dominion of law and yet mercy be possible, how God can be "just and the justifier of the ungodly," is precisely the question which revelation, from first to last, is designed to solve; and Revelation solves it by referring us to emblems drawn from nature, assuming that these emblems themselves set the truth in a clear light, giving no hint that nature is not the image of grace or that "nature is silent about mercy." It has been maintained by well-meaning Christian teachers that "nature gives no hint of mercy." This is said with the view of magnifying divine revelation and magnifying the grace of God in making a revelation in scripture. Nature gives no hint of mercy? Yes, and No. If by mercy is meant snspension of law, *No;* if by mercy is meant deliverance from danger and evil by satisfaction of violated law, *Yes.* And Nature's No and Nature's Yes are alike emphatic, for both are needed, that man may be driven from the false to the true hope; for whoso shall devoutly ask of nature and interpret aright her answer, shall despair of mercy in any other way than by such interposition as shall furnish perfect satisfaction of law. The reign of law is in no way interfered with, invaded, restricted, or modified by the reign of grace. "Mercy and truth meet together." Grace reigns "*through righteousness*,"

that is, not merely without trespassing upon law, but in glorious fulfilment of law. There is room and provision for grace, for deliverance of the needy, the exposed, yes, the guilty, yet never in a way that reflects upon, or interferes with, law in its serene and absolute and undisturbed sway. In all instances of grace, law is honored (1st) by its entire force being expended; being met (2nd) by intervention of powers or agencies under law themselves, and adequate to afford defense and deliverance. Grace in this one only way is more or less clearly foreshadowed in the whole course of nature and providence. Grace never at the expense of law, grace even in nature honors law.

"*Oh Jerusalem! Jerusalem! How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!*" If chickens are to be spared, defended, protected, it is not by any relenting on the part of the hawk pouncing down upon its prey, not by any relenting on the part of the pelting sleet or hail hurled by the hand of law from out the dark storm-cloud, but by timely intervention of an adequate protector. This beautiful emblem is lifted forevermore into the place of highest honor and is endued with marvelous power and pathos, since it was the emblem used by him who "*beheld the city and wept over it.*" God's divinely provided and divinely revealed and divinely wrought salvation lies enshrined in this emblem; salvation consistently with the undisturbed reign of law, not by the suspension of law. In fact nothing more is necessary as a perfect safe-

guard against all defective or heterodox views of atonement than mere belief in the existence of inviolable law; for they all assume that law in its higher realms is pliant, though confessedly not so as we observe its operation everywhere around us.

Law proceeding from God and being the expression of his perfections, must not be considered as requiring or providing for mere justice, but as providing for and requiring the utmost virtue, including mercy itself. God who himself shows mercy only in a way consistent with justice, does by his law require all subjects of law to be merciful in a way consistent with the strictest justice, and the undisturbed reign of law. Indeed, it is one of the grandest and most adorable provisions of infinite wisdom and goodness that law in its own nature not only provides for, but requires of all who are under law that they, to the extent of their ability, bear the burdens of others by assuming their place or by substitution. The place which substitution in point of fact holds in law among men, and as administered by men, has opened the way for the noblest exercise and development of the highest virtues. The weak and the strong, the fortunate and the unfortunate, can alike look up adoringly to God and rejoice before Him in this one hope-inspiring provision whereby the poor and the helpless and even the guilty among men are not only never in this life placed beyond the hope of help from their fellowmen, but never beyond hope of help from Him who is more than man.

The prejudice against substitution as the only way

of deliverance from the condemnation of law is exceedingly prevalent, perhaps universal. The grounds of this prejudice are quite as obvious as the fact of its existence. It is esteemed humiliating. It is humiliating in the extreme. It robs man at once of all grounds of boasting. The pride of man's heart ever prompts him to say: "No one shall be answerable for my obligations to law; no one shall be my substitute, or bear any penalty in my behalf." So intense is this pride and self-sufficiency that not a few have declared they would rather perish than be under obligations to another for deliverance from deserved penalty. In fact nearly all the heresies in the history of the Christian Church have had their roots in this pride which rejects perfect atonement. Clinging to the doctrine of atonement, glorying in the cross, the evangelical in all the centuries past have scarcely been able to find standing room amid the colossal structures of human merit. Rome herself has in this respect been outdone in modern times. The hosts of errorists who have departed from the simplicity of the gospel, differ as they may, in other respects, agree in glorifying human merit and decrying the great atonement. It may be confessed at once that salvation by intervention of a substitute making atonement, rendering complete satisfaction to law in our behalf, is most humiliating. Salvation in any other way would not *exclude*, but *include*, "boasting." Salvation provided and offered to man in this one only way may well teach him the lesson he should have learned in Eden, the lesson of his dependence

upon God. This way of salvation which the proud heart scorns is one that strikes at the very root of man's pride. Salvation, wholly of grace, and by virtue of a proper, real and full satisfaction rendered to justice by another in our stead, none can accept but the "poor in spirit," "the lowly and contrite in heart." It is humiliating to those who are utterly, hopelessly bankrupt that their debts, if paid at all, must be paid by a surety. This humiliation is a necessity of the case. The bankrupt is not in condition to disdain such humiliation. His bankruptcy is a humiliation which engulfs this one; so that his resentment of this is alike unseemly and futile. The humiliation involved in the acceptance of a substitute would be unendurable were this the end of the whole transaction. The noble-minded might be commended for saying: "We will not consent that any one shall be answerable for our debts, whether they be debts to man or to God," were the transaction considered as ending in the mere suffering of the innocent instead of the guilty, and did the suffering involve in the end ruin, injury or injustice, or fail of full reward.

To refuse a substitute freely offering himself when we are hopelessly bankrupt is to say, "Let our obligations remain forever unsatisfied." Those who object to Christ's atonement seem blind to that which Isaiah saw when he "testified before of the sufferings of Christ and the *glory that should follow*." To accept Christ offering himself is to honor him most of all; to reject him is to trample under foot the kindliest pro-

posal ever made to the needy, is to smite in the face the truest friend that ever bent in tenderness of yearning pity and love over the perishing.

Men do not consider that there is absolutely no possible way of satisfying *conscience* in regard to the matter of our obligations to law except by the actual discharge of these obligations. Nor do they carefully consider that conscience is quite fully satisfied when an obligation is met by a substitute. This is true of debt whether to man or to God. In neither case is it possible for conscience to bring any accusation against him whose debt has been paid—whose obligation to law has been met. The conscience that should do this would be a conscience quite severed from knowledge. What other debt, what other obligation, may be laid upon him, by that very transaction which completely and forever freed him from this one, is another matter and must be considered by itself. There may be a debt which not only cannot be paid, but which will grow and increase in the eternal ages, a debt of pure gratitude, a debt which it shall be our heaven to be forever paying in love, praise and service. The objector is not willing to be in debt to any one for his heaven. He is thinking of a debt never to be paid. But the redeemed recognize a debt that is to be joyfully paid. Their very heaven is to consist in the payment of this debt; rather the redeemed are themselves the reward of Christ's work. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." The doctrine of the cross, the doctrine of salvation by one

who came into our exact place and became answerable for all that was against us, has in all the centuries of the Christian era been esteemed foolishness. With tireless toil in all the ages have men striven to set forth some way of salvation better suited to the pride and self-sufficiency of the human heart. Meantime the doctrine of the cross, the doctrine of salvation by means of the Great Atonement, so far from being overthrown by the perpetual assaults made upon it, rises in splendor, glory and power from age to age. It is the only doctrine that brings hope to the perishing. If in his day Paul could say to the people of the world's metropolis, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for *it is the power of God*," surely we, who have spread before us the proofs of this declaration in all the glorious triumphs of the gospel, in all the centuries of the Christian era, may glory only in the cross. I know that there is yet a lively brood of philosophers who are fond of perching themselves upon lofty pinnacles from which they may look down with scorn upon the millions of loyal followers of Christ who unite in saying, Christ "did make a proper, real and full satisfaction," or

> "Jesus paid it all,
> All to him I owe."

I know that neither a Pascal, a Newton nor an Edwards could escape the measureless condecension of these philosophers if he at all commit himself to the humble faith which the people so gladly accept. But the time is coming and now is when philosophers must

look fairly and fully at the common-places of Christian doctrine. The day for contemptuous dismissal of Christian doctrine as foolishness is now past; Christian apologists now meet men on the plane of unqnestioned facts. The battle all along the line is no longer in the clouds, but on the level plain of every day observation and under the brightness of the noonday of scientific light.

The ground of objection to the miracles of scripture, as well as to the theory of redemption generally accepted by the Christian world, has been that they imply the suspension of law. Many of the most eminent and honored of the defenders of the faith agree with the declaration of Dr. McCosh when he says miracles are not against nature except as one of the forces of nature may be against another, as water extinguishes fire. Upon careful consideration it will be found that the majority of recorded miracles not only admit of this interpretation, but absolutely require it. The inspired writers clearly state, not only the miraculous work or deliverance, but state also the means by which it was effected. It was a miracle that the lions in their den hurt not the prophet Daniel. But this miracle consisted, not in any change in that law by which hungry lions are impelled to satisfy their cravings, but in the intervention of angels abundantly able to restrain the lions. And in many instances in which there is not the direct assertion of intervention it is *implied.* It is thus fully established that miracles true and proper do not *necessarily imply* the suspension of

law. It is then a perfectly legitimate and logical deduction that in those recorded miracles in which there is no allusion to the means by which they were wrought, we not only may, but we must, assume that they were effected by intervention and by adequate power and not by suspension of law, *unless in the nature of the case no adequate means or forces could possibly have accomplished the result.* We have no right to assume that the death of one hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians at the hand of the angel in one night was a miracle in any other sense than was that of all who fell by the sword of Coeur de Lion in the Crusades. The miracle consisted in sending an angel fully competent to so great a task. The word angel as used in the record of that event, it must be remembered, does not exclude the employment of many under him as their leader; nor yet the employment of death-dealing agencies of which angels sent to do battle must not be assumed to be ignorant.

This view of miracles so far from detracting from their significance really renders them more wonderful and affecting as proof at once of the wisdom, power and grace of God. It moreover places them in beautiful harmony and accord with the established order and course of nature, providence and redemption. It brings to view the otherwise unrevealed resources of law. It shows how the beings and forces that are themselves under law can be employed in a most marvelous and benevolent way to meet other forces that are under law—meet and triumph over them in a way

that honors and respects the law by which they are governed, and at the same time honors and obeys law in triumphing over them. It also reveals to us how all the triumphs and achievements of virtue, whether human or divine, are triumphs not by means of suspension of law, but triumphs for which law in its own nature fully provides, and to which law gives its full assent and utmost approval. It farther leads us to regard with wonder and delight how fully, not only the wisdom, the power, the justice and the goodness of God, but even the mercy of God, or the infinitude of the divine perfections of which his mercy is the utmost expression, find a place in law as law is from God and is the declaration of his character.

INDEX

ATONEMENT
False theories fore-doomed, 24.
A mystery, yet every way credible, 131.
Crucial test of theories of atonement, 152.
Can never be fully estimated by mere creatures, 175.

AXIOMS
Not self-existent, 47.
Not determined by a self-existent nature of things, 60.
Not determined for but by the Creator, 66.

"COMMERCIAL LANGUAGE"
Used in Scripture, 157.
"So much for so much," 183.

CONFIRMATION
Not attainable by mere creatures, 81.
All confirmed by Christ, 82.
Moral beings not needing confirmation imaginary, 83.

CONSCIENCE
Not a microscopic Bible, 77.
Not a lawgiver, 78.
Receives revealed law, 80.
Satisfied only when law is satisfied, 112.
Indestructible, 114.

CREATURES
Necessarily Fallible, 83.

DEBT
Sin as debt, 136.
Obligation on the person, 138.
Imputation of legal obligation, 139.

DISPENSING POWER
Admitted by some of the orthodox, 148.
The necessity for Christ's intervention removed by this admission, 150.
The occurrence of sin no reason for dispensing with Law, 151.

DESIGN
In Nature always assumed by Science, 18.
Eagerly sought for from age to age, 62.

DOMINION
Promised, 94.
The reward of obedience, 95.
Attainable by all, 96.

Emblems
Abounding in scripture, 21.

Equivalent
Equivalent value and equivalent penalty admitted in law, 156.
Not peculiar to redemption by Christ, 160.
Significance of its admission as providing for substitution, 163.

Force
Always from that which lives, 36.

Gratitude
"The grounds of our gratitude" to God and to Christ, 179.

"Individualism"
The legitimate fruit of the prevalent error that Law is implanted in moral beings, 80.

Inward Light
Lauded by skeptics and errorists, 70.

Justice
The same in the highest as in the lowest sphere, 158.

Law
Natural and Moral from the will of God, 33.
Not apart from God, 68.
Necessarily revealed, 86.
No relaxation, 176.
No barrier to the Divine will, 185.
Christ merely obeyed law, 211.

Leibnitz
Views regarding space and duration, 27.

Microscope
Its power in revealing vital action, 37.
But lately attained, 38.
Its field inexhaustible as that of the telescope, 68.

Miracles
Not by suspension of Law, 28.
The Miracle of Redemption, 29.
Miracles of scripture, 234.

Motion
Observable motion in plants, 37.
In and by animal organisms, 39, 40.
Motion traceable to man's power of hand and brain, 41.

Ocean Steamer
Its motion due to vital force of hand and brain, 41.

Prayer
James Renwick's, 102.
Reflex influence and Baal's prophets, 103.

Redemption
By price, 159.
By an equivalent, 164.

Reinstatement
Ensured by satisfaction of law, 145.
Nothing is satisfaction of law, nothing is real atonement if it fail to reinstate those in whose behalf it is rendered, 146.

Relaxation of Law
Turrettine's view of the relaxation of law, 24.
No relaxation of law in accepting satisfaction by a substitute, 172.
Relaxation of law inconsistent with perfect atonement, 177.

Right
Not determined by a self-existent nature of things, 50.
The will of God, 51.

Righteousness
Destroyed by one offense, 117.
The just penalty, as well as natural sequence, of one offense, 118.
Righteousness a free gift, 210.

Satisfaction
Of unrelaxed law, 146.
The charge that the atonement of Christ resembles too much a commercial transaction and the fatal concessions made in answering this charge, 147.
Either an entire satisfaction of law necessary or none at all, 148.

Sovereignty
In Redemption as in Creation, 25.
In providing the Saviour, 26.
Not inconsistent with pre-determination, 55.

Substitution
The importance of the question, Can atonement be made by a substitute? 127.
Theory of relaxation of law in admitting Christ as a substitute, 128.
Law in its own nature fully satisfied by a substitute, 128.
Substitution limited and restricted in the administration of law among men, 127.
Justice satisfied by the acceptance of a substitute, 130.
Similar principles involved in Christ's substitution, 131.
Satisfaction theory practically believed by Christians, 132.
Man's imcompetency a ground of false conclusions in regard to substitution, 137.
Substitution normal, as opposed to substitution by prerogative, a vital distinction, 138.

Suffering
Involuntary sufferings no satisfaction of law, 120.

Permitted in meeting legal obligations, 165.
May involve humiliation, 166.

No limit fixed by law, 168.
The innocent alone can suffer for the guilty, 169.

SURETYSHIP
Perfect involves reinstatement, 140.
Constituted by covenant engagement, 191.
Constitutes a "legal unit," 192.
Involves imputation of legal obligation, 138.
Imputation of release or righteousness, 139.
These facts overthrow the doctrine of indefinite atonement, 144.
Reinstatement a part of the satisfaction of law, 145.

SPACE
Motion essential to our knowledge of it, 34.
Space not self-existent or independent of all being, 61.
Not a mere condition of existence, 65.

STRATEGIC POSITION
Yielded by admitting that law may be relaxed or dispensed with, 149.
Maintained by adhering to the principle that law is inviolable, 150.

WAIF
Endowed with freedom of will and responsible to God alone, 97.

WILL
In its nature self-asserting, 88.
This manifest in infancy, 89.
Appeal to consciousness, 90.
This an excellence, 93.
Capable of true tribute to the Supreme will, 95.
Free from invasion by seraph or demon, 97.
Will as power and will as commandment, 98.
Wholly surrendered to the divine will yet not enslaved, but left in freedom and honor, 101.

BT
265

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